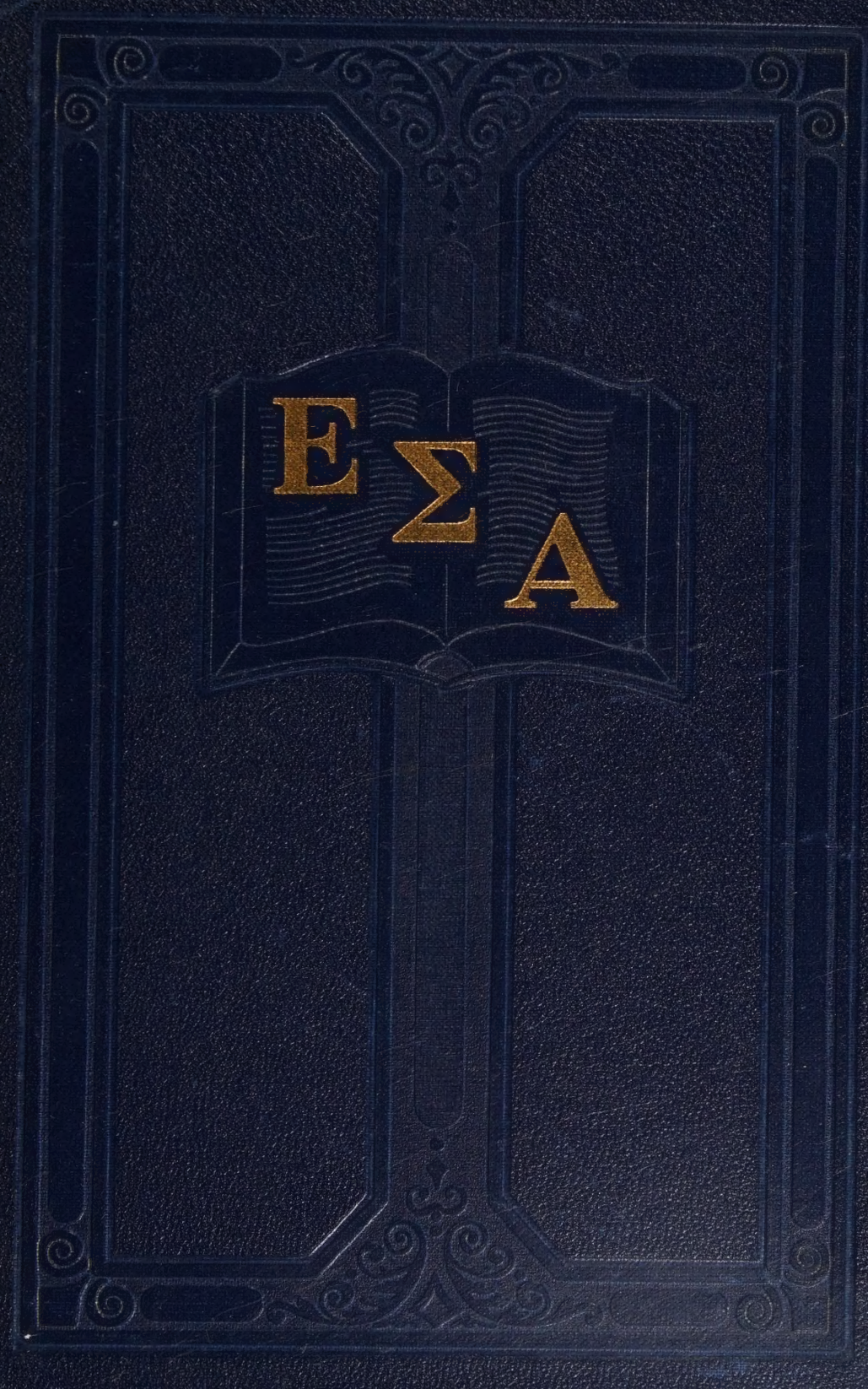
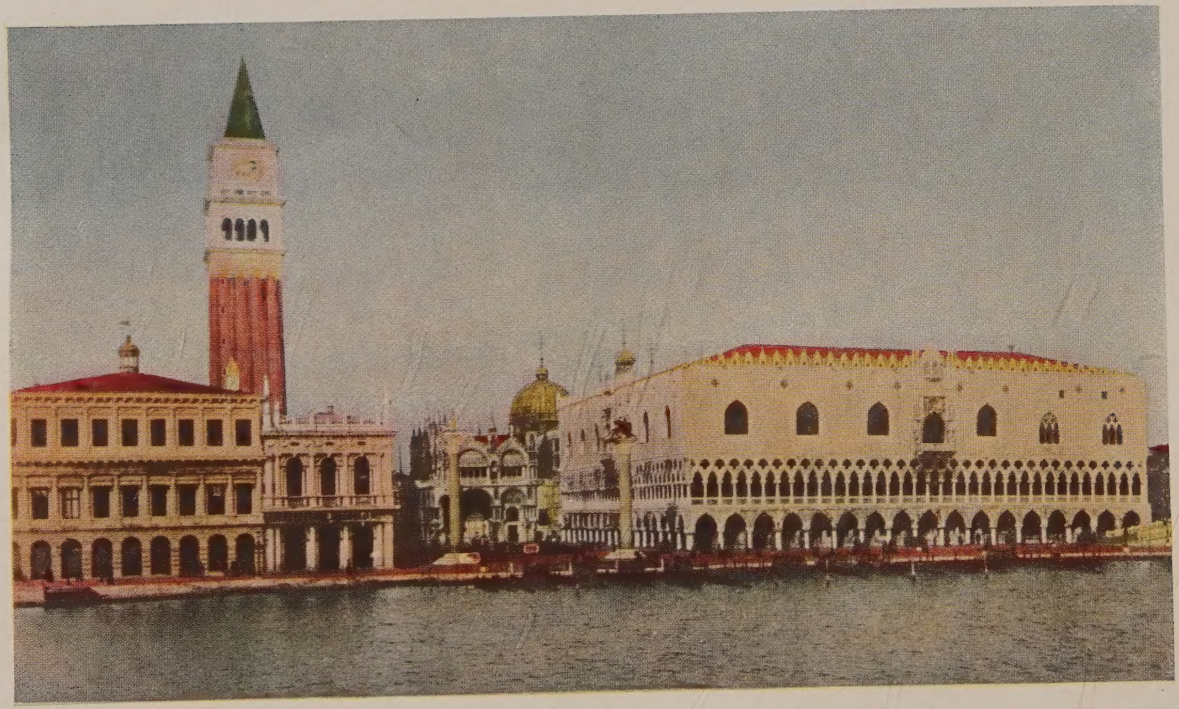

ΕΣΑ

The
WRITINGS
of
MANKIND
SYLVESTER
GREEN
LAND
A ME RI
CA
PACIFIC
OCEAN
ATLANTIC
OCEAN

NORWAY
SWEDEN
RUSSIA
EUROPE
ASIA
GERMANY
POLAND
FRANCE
SPAIN
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
PERSIA
ARABIA
EGYPT
INDIA
CHINA
AFRICA
INDIAN
OCEAN
EAST INDIES

THE
WRITINGS OF MANKIND



CAMPANILE AND PALACE OF THE DOGES
VENICE, ITALY

THE WRITINGS OF MANKIND

Selections from the Writings of All Ages, with Extensive Historical Notes, Comment and Criticism, Giving the Customs, Habits, Characters; the Arts, Philosophies and Religions, of Those Nations That Have Contributed Most to Civilization

BY

CHARLES H. SYLVESTER

AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE"
"JOURNEYS THROUGH BOOKLAND", ETC.

TWENTY VOLUMES
Illustrated

This Material Especially Selected
for the Exclusive Use of

Epsilon Sigma Alpha Sorority

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
KANSAS CITY, MO.

COPYRIGHT, 1924,
BY
BELLOWS-REEVE COMPANY

MADE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CONTENTS

ITALY

ITALY, Chapter I will be found in Volume VII

CHAPTER II THE CRUSADERS

PAGE

I. Origin 3625
II. Peter the Hermit 3628
III. The First Crusade 3630
IV. Military Orders 3636
V. The Second Crusade 3639
VI. The Third Crusade 3640
VII. The Fourth Crusade 3642
VIII. Extracts from Villehardouin's Memoir of the Fourth Crusade 3644
IX. The Eighth and Ninth Crusades 3653
X. Pictures from Joinville's "Memoirs" 3654
XI. The Children's Crusade 3666
XII. The End of the Crusades 3668

CHAPTER III MEDIEVAL MYTHS

I. Introduction 3671
II. The Wandering Jew 3672
III. Prester John 3675
IV. The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus 3679
V. Schamir 3684
VI. The Piper of Hamelin 3687
VII. Bishop Hatto 3689
VIII. Melusina 3691
IX. The Fortunate Isles 3696
X. The Holy Grail 3700
XI. The Mountain of Venus 3702
XII. Conclusion 3706

CHAPTER IV HISTORY OF ITALY

I. Scope of the History 3707
II. The Ostrogoths 3707

PAGE

III. The Lombards 3708
IV. The Franks 3709
V. Invasions and Anarchy 3710
VI. Independent Cities 3710
VII. War of Investiture 3715
VIII. Guelphs and Ghibellines 3716
IX. A Characteristic Incident 3719
X. A Prosperous Period 3720
XI. Genoa and Pisa 3723
XII. The Bianchi and Neri 3724
XIII. Venice 3728
XIV. The Fifteenth Century 3732
XV. Florence and the Medici 3732
XVI. Italy in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries 3736
XVII. Napoleon 3737
XVIII. Growth of National Consciousness 3737
XIX. Young Italy 3738
XX. Cavour and Unification 3740
XXI. Victor Emmanuel and Italy of Today 3742
XXII. Naples 3744
XXIII. Rome and the Papal States 3748

CHAPTER V THE FIRST PERIOD

1100–1475

BEGINNINGS

I. Introduction 3750
II. Latin Literature in Italy 3752
III. St. Francis of Assisi 3753
IV. Frederick II 3762
V. Cielo Dalcamo 3765
VI. Guittone D'Arezzo 3771
VII. Guido Guinicelli 3772
VIII. Two Minor Poets 3774
IX. The Forms of Italian Lyrics 3777
X. Conclusion 3780

CHAPTER VI THE FIRST PERIOD (Continued)
1100–1475
DANTE AND "LA VITA NUOVA"

PAGE

I. Biographical Sketch 3781
II. The Works of Dante 3790
III. The "Vita Nuova" 3791

CHAPTER VII THE FIRST PERIOD (Continued)
1100–1475
THE "DIVINA COMMEDIA"

I. The Great Epic 3813
II. Preliminary Notions 3815
III. Dante's Universe 3817
IV. The "Inferno" 3820
V. The "Purgatorio" 3844
VI. The "Paradiso" 3865

CHAPTER VIII THE FIRST PERIOD (Continued)
1100–1475
DANTE'S CIRCLE

I. Of What It Consisted 3888
II. Guido Cavalcanti 3889
III. Cino da Pistoia 3891
IV. Folgore da San Gemignano 3895
V. Cecco Angiolieri 3904

CHAPTER IX THE FIRST PERIOD (Continued)
1100–1475
PETRARCH

I. Biography 3908
II. The Writings of Petrarch 3927
III. Selections from Petrarch 3931

CHAPTER X THE FIRST PERIOD (Concluded)
1100–1475
BOCCACCIO AND THE FIRST DECLINE

I. Biographical Sketch 3947
II. The Works of Boccaccio 3950

PAGE

III. Boccaccio's Sonnets 3952
IV. The "Decameron" 3954
V. Descriptive Passages 3957
VI. The Tales of the "Decameron" 3965
VII. Imitators of Boccaccio 3985
VIII. The First Decline of Italian Literature ... 3991

CHAPTER XI SECOND PERIOD
1476–1675
LORENZO DE' MEDICI; POLITIAN

I. The Renaissance 3999
II. Lorenzo the Magnificent 4003
III. The Writings of Lorenzo de' Medici 4006
IV. Poliziano 4023

CHAPTER XII SECOND PERIOD (Continued)
1476–1675
ITALIAN ART AND ARTISTS

I. Architecture 4046
II. Sculpture 4049
III. Michelangelo 4051
IV. Cellini 4058
V. Extracts from Cellini's "Memoirs" 4063
VI. Painting 4106
VII. Leonardo da Vinci 4108
VIII. Raphael 4114
IX. The Decline of Painting 4115

ITALY, Chapters XIII to XXI will be found in Volume IX

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FULL-PAGE PLATES

Campanile and Palace of the Doges, Venice..... *Colored Frontispiece*

PAGE

Crusaders Marching to Jerusalem..... 3626

Peter, the Hermit, Preaching the First Crusade: *From Engraving by Doré*..... 3630

St. Louis in Jerusalem: *From Painting by Cabanel.* 3654

The Children's Crusade: *From Engraving by Doré.* 3666

The Pied Piper of Hamelin..... 3686

Etruscan Tombs of the Fifth Century..... 3708

Massacre of the Sicilian Vespers..... 3746

Death of St. Francis: *From a Fresco by Giotto*.... 3754

Dante's House, Padua..... 3782

Dante: *From Painting by Giotto*..... 3790

Dante Monument, Trent, Italy..... 3798

Dante and Beatrice..... 3808

Purgatorio, Canto I

"The radiant planet, that to love invites,
Made all the orient laugh, and veiled beneath
The Pisces' light, that in his escort came."

From Engraving by Doré 3820

Inferno, Canto XXXI

"Yet in the abyss,
That Lucifer with Judas low engulfs,
Lightly he placed us;"

(Antaeus placed Dante and Vergil in the lowest gulf.)

From Engraving by Doré 3836

Purgatorio, Canto II

"The Heavenly steersman at the prow was seen
Visibly written Blessed in his looks."

From Engraving by Doré 3846

Purgatorio, Canto XII

"With equal pace, as oxen in the yoke,
I, with that laden spirit, journeyed on,
Long as the mild instructor suffer'd me."

PAGE

From Engraving by Doré 3860

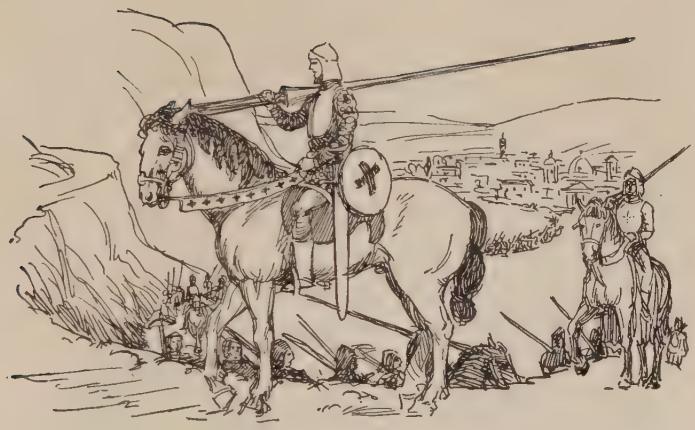
Paradiso, Canto XIV

"And I beheld myself,
Sole with my lady, to more lofty bliss
Translated."

From Engraving by Doré 3872

Petrarch 3920
Petrarch and Laura 3934
Boccaccio 3948
The Decameron: *From Painting by Wagrez* 3972
Cosimo de' Medici: *From Painting by Bronzino* ... 4002
Michelangelo at Work on His "Moses": *From Painting by Torrini* 4050
House of Michelangelo 4056
Cellini 4080
Da Vinci: *From Painting by Himself* 4108

In addition to the full-page illustrations, but not listed here, there are numerous etchings, at the beginnings and ends of chapters, which will be helpful and add interest to the reading of the text



CHAPTER II

THE CRUSADES

ORIGIN. The Crusaders were religious wars that extended over several centuries, and were waged originally to secure the safety of pilgrims visiting the Holy Sepulcher and to set up a Christian rule in Palestine. Later they turned into attacks upon Mohammedan strongholds, and, after the invasions of the Ottoman Turks, into a defensive warfare.

It is customary to speak of the Crusades as six or seven in number, but, as a matter of fact, they were almost continuous, and scarcely a decade elapsed without its expedition; but as only the more successful and the more disastrous have found a place in literature we may accept the usual classification.

To appreciate these great movements one must remember that the one unifying influence in Europe was Christianity, and that the end of the eleventh century was a period of great enthusiasms, in which life was one continuous excitement. Thus the crowning act of a Christian life was a pilgrimage to the holy places where Christ had lived, and the Holy Sepulcher in which His body had lain. The Church preached repentance and penance for sin, and many who had lived thoughtlessly felt the need of forgiveness and sought remission in the long and perilous journey to Jerusalem. Carrying the scallop, a half shell not unlike a clam-shell, with feet clothed in sandals, pilgrims set out from all parts of Europe in ever increasing numbers and trudged wearily across the wilderness to Constantinople. Here the Greeks protected or plundered them, as occasion suited, and sent them on through the territory of the Saracens who, though they hated the religion, yet respected the travelers and permitted them to pass on payment of a small toll. The joy of the pilgrims at the completion of their long journey cannot be appreciated by us of calmer temperament, but to people of that age it was convincing enough. When the pilgrims returned to their homes, their faces shining with the solemn gladness of sins forgiven and bearing their passport to heaven in the shape of the cloak they had worn into Jerusalem, when they exhibited the sacred relics they had secured and spoke of their marvelous power, there were

CRUSADERS MARCHING TO JERUSALEM

outbursts of popular enthusiasm that could not be quelled, and ever new bands of devotees started out on the perilous journey.

About 1050 the Seljuk Turks drove the Greeks out of Asia Minor, overpowered the Saracens, captured Jerusalem and instituted such cruel persecutions on the pilgrims and even the Saracens themselves that the hatred the Christians had always felt for the infidels burst into flames, and all Europe began to cry for deliverance.

The student, however, must see contributory causes for the Crusades in the facts that Western Europe was becoming overcrowded with a restless, vigorous population that needed room for its energies; that the leaders were accustomed to warfare, full of military enthusiasm, and desirous of new wars and greater conquests; and that the rich commerce of the East was always a tempting bait for those who were ambitious to secure wealth.

Alex Comnenus, the Greek Emperor, was justifiably alarmed when he saw the Seljuks establishing their kingdom with a capital not a hundred miles from Constantinople, and having felt the power of Western armies, and having known their devotion to Christianity and their enthusiasm for the holy places, sent his request for aid to the Church, the one power competent in his estimation to bring Europe to his assistance.

Pope Urban II, a wise and enterprising ruler, thought he saw here an opportunity to

reconcile the Eastern Church and the Roman Catholic, to save for the Emperor his capital city and to enlist a powerful ruler in an attempt to rescue the Holy Sepulcher. Accordingly, he called a council to meet at Clermont in France, in 1095.

Here his rare eloquence wrought the delegates to the highest pitch of religious enthusiasm, so that when he asked Western chivalry to spend its energies in redeeming the holy places from Turkish pollution, the excited crowds shouted in unison *"Deus vult"* (God wills it), and the first Crusade was begun under the benediction of Pope and Church council. A red cross embroidered or otherwise fixed to the right shoulder of the dress or upon the armor was adopted as the symbol, and from the old French word *cruz* (cross), the word *crusade* originated.

II. Peter the Hermit. Peter was born of gentle parents at Amiens, about the middle of the eleventh century. After studying both in Paris and Italy, he became a soldier and served with much distinction, retired from the army, married and had several children; but on the death of his wife he became a monk and subsequently a hermit. By some authorities it is claimed that the idea of the crusade originated with Peter when he saw a vision in the sepulcher while on a visit to Jerusalem, but others deny this and say that Peter was not in Palestine before the crusade and that he got the idea from the Pope.

Gibbon describes him in the following words: "His stature was small, his appearance contemptible; but his eye was keen and lively, and he possessed that vehemence of speech which seldom fails to impart the persuasion of the soul. . . . His diet was abstemious, his prayers long and fervent, and the alms which he received with one hand he distributed with the other. His head was bare, his feet naked; his meager body was wrapped in a coarse garment; he bore and displayed a weighty crucifix, and the ass on which he rode was sanctified in the public eye by the service of the man of God. . . . When he painted the sufferings of the natives and the pilgrims of Palestine every heart was melted to compassion; every breast glowed with indignation when he challenged the warriors of the age to defend their brethren and rescue their Savior. His ignorance of art and language was compensated by sighs and tears and ejaculations. . . . The most perfect orator of Athens might have envied the success of his eloquence."

Milman says of him: "He rode on a mule, with a crucifix in his hand, his head and feet bare; his dress was a long robe, girt with a cord, and a hermit's cloak of the coarsest stuff. He preached in the pulpits, on the roads, in the market-places. His eloquence was that which stirs the heart of the people, for it came from his own—brief, figurative, full of bold apostrophes; it was mingled with his own tears, with his own groans; he beat his breast: the con-

tagion spread throughout his audience. His preaching appealed to every passion—to valor and shame, to indignation and pity, to the pride of the warrior, to the compassion of the man, the religion of the Christian, to the love of the brethren, to the hatred of the unbeliever aggravated by his insulting tyranny, to reverence for the Redeemer and the saints, to the desire of expiating sin, to the hope of eternal life."

The impassioned appeals of Peter the Hermit spread the crusading spirit throughout France and Italy, especially when sinners learned that by bathing in the Jordan sins might be washed away and that the most heinous offenses might be atoned for by carrying the cross through Palestine.

III. The First Crusade. 1. *The Vanguard.* Other preachers took up the cry of Peter the Hermit, the nations responded to the holy cause, and a great wave of humanity was set rolling eastward. "The most distant islands and savage countries," says William Malmsbury, "were inspired with this ardent passion. The Welshman left his hunting, the Scotchman his fellowship with vermin, the Dane his drinking party, the Norwegian his raw fish." Noblemen sold or mortgaged their lands; laborers abandoned their plows; women left their hearths and distaffs; the very children forsook their play. It is difficult to form any idea of the numbers who took part in this First Crusade, one authority claiming that in the spring of 1096 not fewer than six million human

From Engraving by Doré

PETER THE HERMIT

PREACHING THE FIRST CRUSADE.

beings were in motion toward Palestine. This must be an exaggeration, but we do know that prior to the setting out of the great hosts of European chivalry, there were four huge swarms of the populace, numbering in all more than a quarter of a million souls, that had started on their way to Palestine.

The first of the hordes, numbering perhaps some twenty thousand foot, was commanded by Walter the Pennyless, a Burgundian gentleman, who, with a very few of his followers, reached Constantinople—the rest were cut to pieces in Bulgaria. The second detachment, twice as large, commanded by Peter himself, followed the route of its predecessor and reached Constantinople greatly reduced in numbers. Here the two "armies" joined, crossed the Bosporus, and were utterly defeated by the Turks. The third expedition, nearly as large as the first, composed of Germans and led by a priest named Gottschalk, was dispersed in Hungary. The fourth section, twice larger than the other three combined, was a rabble of abandoned wretches who spread destruction wherever they went and committed horrible outrages, especially against the Jews. They gathered in the countries of Western Europe, swept through Germany like a devastating cyclone, but were exterminated by famine, pestilence and the swords of the Hungarians. The effect of these miserable inroads by the vanguard was to alarm the Eastern Empire, throw discredit on the movement and

make it much more difficult for the chivalric crusaders when they appeared.

2. *The Real Crusaders.* Quite different from the needy, thoughtless, inefficient throng that followed Peter the Hermit were the real crusaders. They were long in starting, but when they did get under way, they were a powerful army, or rather six powerful armies, collected from all the countries of Western Europe, but principally from France, the Low Countries and the banks of the Rhine. Separately, and at considerable distances apart, the six armies marched, each under its own chosen leader, a noble knight whose name is still remembered for his high character and mighty deeds.

First in importance was he who is best known as Godfrey of Bouillon (Boulogne), who had been rewarded for his conspicuous bravery in the siege of Rome (1084) by being appointed Duke of Lower Lorraine. Sincerely pious, pure in character, calm and moderate in his dealings with his neighbors, but valorous in combat with his enemies, Godfrey deserved the high esteem in which he was held. Next to him was Robert, Duke of Normandy, the eldest son of William the Conqueror, who, though he lost his crown through weakness, regained the respect of his English followers by his conduct on this Crusade. Raymond of Toulouse, a veteran warrior who had fought against the Moslems in Spain, was chief among the French. From Italy came Bohemond, Prince of Tarentum, the eldest son of Robert Guiscard, who

was excluded from the throne of Apulia by his brother Robert, but who had already distinguished himself in war against the Eastern Emperor at Constantinople; and Bohemond's cousin Tancred, the perfect knight, whom we shall see as the hero of Tasso's epic and of all historians of the Crusades. The remaining two leaders were Hugh, Count of Vermandois, brother of the King of France, and Count Robert of Flanders.

No sovereign of Europe took part in the First Crusade, and thus the cause lacked the unity that such a presence might have given. But their chief vassals were there, and each feudal lord ruled his followers independently, while each knight led his band of vassals, large or small, as his circumstances permitted, and paid allegiance only to his own overlord. Here indeed was the chivalry of the world, knighthood in its flower, gentry, yeomanry, serfs—all the classes of society that the feudal system engendered. Not a few of the knights were accompanied by their ladies, who traveled with all the comfort and luxury obtainable, but who, when they had to submit to privations and dangers, did it with the pride and grace of birth and station.

Although all figures are unreliable, a conservative estimate would give the number in the six armies at a hundred thousand mailed knights, who brought with them a train of half a million. To victual so vast a company on the march was practically impossible, so they pro-

ceeded by different ways, agreeing to rendezvous at Constantinople.

If Alexius, the Greek Emperor, had been startled by the arrival of the tattered band of Peter the Hermit, what must have been his state of mind when this magnificent host met at his doors? Certainly Alexius was wise enough to see the danger that threatened him if this powerful army should conceive the idea of taking lands for themselves, so he cajoled all the leaders except Count Raymond and Tancred into swearing the oath of allegiance, and then without giving them time to take concerted action he passed them on into Asia, realizing how powerful a defense the crusaders might be against the Turks.

3. *The Siege of Antioch.* Peter the Hermit, whose unfortunate force had been so terribly defeated at Nicaea, joined Godfrey of Bouillon at Constantinople and advanced with the crusaders, who, assisted by the wily Alexius, laid siege to Nicaea, the capital of Sultan Soliman, and in June, 1097, had the joy of seeing it fall into their hands. Alexius, intriguing as ever, managed to keep control of the city himself, while he hurried the crusaders on toward Jerusalem.

After spending some time on the march and winning various minor victories, the crusaders reached Syria and laid siege to Antioch. For seven long and weary months the city held out, while the ranks of the besiegers were being steadily thinned by famine and disease. Many

of the brave knights lost heart; even Peter the Hermit became discouraged and fled, but he was overtaken by the soldiers of Tancred and brought back to receive a public reprimand. But the besieged were in a worse state than the besiegers, and in early June, 1098, the city surrendered, and the crusaders, deaf to the cries of humanity, massacred the inhabitants. But this triumph was short-lived, for a Persian army appeared and shut up the crusaders in the city they had just captured. Famine, pestilence and desertion again did their work, but in spite of all their weaknesses the crusaders were immensely superior to the Mohammedans, and by midsummer the latter had been defeated overwhelmingly and the road was open to Jerusalem.

4. *The Capture of Jerusalem.* It is said to have been on a bright summer morning in 1099 that forty thousand crusaders, the remnant of the numerous hosts that had left Europe three years before, caught their first inspiring sight of Jerusalem. With intense emotion in every breast the siege was begun, and in a little over five weeks the great object of the expedition was realized—Jerusalem was in the hands of the Christians. What followed? Merciless butchery of the defenders, wanton death by fire and sword for both Moslem and Jew—then worship at the sepulcher of their Lord by the followers of the Prince of Peace! Tancred showed some compassion, and Raymond gave safe conduct to the brave defenders of the

citadel, but otherwise the destruction of their foes was a sad commentary on the savage state of society in those days.

Eight days after the surrender Godfrey was elected King of Jerusalem, but the modest knight, saying that it was not fit for him to wear a crown of gold when his Savior had worn a crown of thorns, declared himself merely the Defender of the Holy Sepulcher and set about the establishment of his authority by defeating the Moslems in a great battle on the plains of Ascalon. In 1100 Godfrey died, and his brother was crowned King of Jerusalem.

Two other principalities, at Edessa and Antioch, had been founded, and for fifty years they not only defended themselves successfully against the Moslems, but widened their borders, increased in wealth and gave promise of future strength. Thus a Christian feudal system was established in Asia, and the Greek Empire was freed from immediate danger, enabling it to extend its sway over its old provinces in Asia Minor.

IV. Military Orders. Led by a feeling that upon them now devolved the assistance and protection of pilgrims and by a natural love for display and adventure, military orders were established in which initiates, besides taking the three vows of monasticism, added a fourth in the form of a promise to defend the pilgrims and to aid the poor and sick.

1. *Knights Templars.* Most famous and most powerful of these orders was the Templars,

Knights Templars, or, as they are sometimes known, Brethren of the Temple at Jerusalem, Soldiery of the Temple or Soldiers of Christ. This, the oldest of the orders, was founded in 1118 or 1119 by nine French knights then fighting in the Holy Land. Their original name was Poor Soldiers, their only vow to protect the pilgrims, and their only source of subsistence the alms of the faithful. King Baldwin gave them a part of his palace for a residence, to which the abbot of the Church of the Temple added another building for an armory, and from the latter fact arose their best-known name of Knights Templars. The military nature of the order attracted wide attention, and the Templars grew rapidly in numbers and influence. Their standard was called *Beauseant* (a French word which was also their famous battle cry) and consisted of a field striped in black and white, upon which was a red cross; their badge was a white cloak with a red eight-pointed Maltese cross on the left shoulder.

Having received Papal sanction the order spread rapidly throughout Europe, legacies and donations of lands and moneys were showered upon it, and members of the noblest families everywhere sought to join it. The vows of poverty and chastity were turned to derision, and extravagance and display characterized all its actions, but the other vows were held in respect, and a highly developed system of government and public works were ultimately established.

The history of the Knights Templars is the story of the Crusades and of the conflicts of Christians with Moslems; for nearly two hundred years they formed the most renowned portion of the Christian troops, and every battle with the enemy gave an exhibition of their courage and prowess.

Philip le Bel of France, always an enemy of the order, compassed its downfall in the beginning of the fourteenth century, and a century later it existed only in Portugal, where it bore the name of Order of Christ.

2. *Knights Hospitallers.* The Knights of the Holy Sepulcher, or Knights of St. John, as the Knights Hospitallers were sometimes called, was an order that had for its original purpose the care of the sick in hospitals, and that was organized at the end of the First Crusade in Jerusalem, where so many sick and wounded soldiers were then lying. Care then often included defense, and frequently the knights were called from nursing the sick to fighting for them with spear and sword. In the twelfth century their military organization was perfected when they defended Acre unsuccessfully against the Moslems who had taken Jerusalem. In the fourteenth century they captured the island of Rhodes and continued to hold it till 1523, when it was seized by the Turks. After this their influence, which had extended all over Europe, began to decline, though they found refuge in the island of Malta and remained there until dispossessed by Napoleon in 1798.

Thereafter, on account of their wealth and power, they were envied by the sovereigns of Europe, who lost few opportunities to despoil them.

Their badge was a black robe and cowl, the former bearing on the left shoulder the famous Maltese cross of eight points, which is said to have originated by placing four barbed arrows point to point.

3. *The Teutonic Knights.* During the siege of Acre in 1190 a third order of similar characteristics was formed by some German merchants of Bremen and Lubeck. Like the others, this order prospered and grew in power and wealth, though its membership was solely of German knights. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries they conquered Lithuania and the Baltic provinces, but later they were defeated at Tannenberg, and the importance of the order declined rapidly. When in 1525 the Grand Master Albert of Brandenburg was converted to Protestantism the order was secularized and in such form persisted till suppressed by Napoleon in 1809.

The sign of the order was a white mantle bearing a cross of black bordered with gold.

V. The Second Crusade. In 1144 the principality of Edessa was seized by the Turks, and again the religious enthusiasm and racial hatred of the Christians were aroused. Bernard of Clairvaux, then the most influential man in Europe, came from his monastery, and by the marvelous eloquence of his tongue,

backed by the influence of his ascetic life, his piety and his religious fervor, drew to his side the nobility and wealth of Europe, as Peter the Hermit had drawn the rabble.

Louis VII, King of France, took up the cross, and his people, leaving castles, cities and fields, until many a district was practically deserted, led the way; more slowly the influence of Bernard made its way in Germany, but at last Conrad III gave the word and the Germans in their belated enthusiasm did not wait for the French, but set out overland for Constantinople. Manuel Comnenus, grandson of Alexius, was then Emperor, and while professedly favoring the crusaders, he secretly betrayed them to the Turks. The German contingent, repulsed in their first onslaught into Asia, fell back upon Constantinople about the time the French arrived, and Manuel urged them all forward, where in the mountains the Turks slaughtered them so mercilessly that nine-tenths of the three hundred thousand who engaged in the crusade failed to return, and nothing of note was accomplished.

VI. The Third Crusade. In 1171 Saladin, a Kurdish chieftain who is pictured as possessing all the virtues of chivalry, spread his rule over a vast territory from Egypt to Arabia, and in 1187, after fourteen days of bloody fighting, captured the city of Jerusalem. Unlike the Christian conquerors of less than a century before, he spared his captives and treated the knights with high honor. The news of the fall

of Jerusalem filled Europe with amazement and horror, and when Frederick I, Emperor of Germany, Richard I, King of England, and Philip, first King of France, called upon their subjects to recover the Holy City, the response was immediate and general.

Frederick Barbarossa (Red Beard), as he is familiarly known, was an experienced soldier whose reign was one of the most brilliant in German history, and his large army of cavalry and infantry, after an overland march to Constantinople, entered upon almost continuous battles with the Turks, having every reason to expect success. Nevertheless, when finally they had opened the way to Jerusalem, Frederick was drowned while bathing in a stream, and thereafter the attacks of the Turks grew so fierce that the Germans were compelled to abandon the enterprise and force their way back against such bitter opposition that scarcely a tenth of them reached Constantinople.

The armies of France and England went to Palestine by sea, and for more than two years besieged Acre, which fell in 1191. Richard and Philip, however, grew jealous of each other, the French abandoned the cause, and Richard, undertaking the task alone, found himself unable to win. This was the famous Richard Coeur de Lion (the Lion-hearted), one of England's great heroes. Goeffrey de Vinsauf, writing of Richard's fighting at Joppa, says: "On that day he performed the most gallant deeds on the furious army of the Turks, and slew

numbers with his sword, which shone like lightning. Some of them were cloven in two from their helmet to their teeth, whilst others lost their heads, arms and other members, which were lopped off at a single blow. While the King was thus laboring with incredible exertions in the fight, a Turk advanced toward him mounted on a foaming steed." This man brought to Richard two noble horses sent by a brother of Saladin "as a token of his well-known honorable character, requesting him earnestly to accept them and make use of them, and if he returned safe and sound out of that battle, to remember the gift and recompense it in any manner he pleased."

The most Richard could accomplish, however, was to secure from Saladin a truce for three years and eight months, during which time the Holy Sepulcher might be visited unmolested and untaxed. *The Talisman,* by Sir Walter Scott, gives us the magic details of the crusade.

VII. The Fourth Crusade. This crusade was undertaken by Pope Innocent III in 1203, though at that time the Christians were not suffering from Turkish persecutions. The expedition assembled at Venice and never entered Palestine at all, but contented itself with seizing the Eastern Empire from the Greeks and placing Baldwin, Count of Flanders, on the Byzantine throne, where he and his successors maintained themselves for fifty-six years. Nevertheless, the crusade had been advocated

in the spirit of the others by the Pope and the priest, Fulk of Neuilly, and multitudes of devout pilgrims had joined it. Some failed to keep their tryst, money was not forthcoming, and the Venetians would not transport the faithful without pay; the natural leader, Count Thibaut of Champagne, died, and the Marquis of Montferrat, a worthy but weaker man, succeeded him; then the shrewd old Doge of Venice saw a chance for political gain, donned the cross and by intrigue succeeded in sending the crusading host against the Christian city of Zara, on the Adriatic. It is unnecessary to go further into the intrigues by which the troops were diverted from their first purpose, but it must be said that as a crusade it was a gigantic and pathetic failure, and as such the great Pope who had done so much to inaugurate it denounced it again and again.

But we have some accounts that are extremely interesting. For instance, Robert of Clari, an eye-witness and one of the crusaders, has left this account of the scene when the fleet departed from Venice in 1202:

The Doge had with him fifty galleys, all at his own charges. The galley in which he himself sailed was all vermilion, and there was a pavilion of red satin stretched above his head. And there were before him four trumpets of silver that trumpeted, and cymbals that made joy and merriment. And all the men of note, as well clerks as lay, and whether of small condition or great, made such joy at our departure, that never before had such joy been made, or so fine a fleet been seen. And then the pilgrims caused all the priests and clerks there present to get up

into the castles of the ships, and sing the *Veni Creator Spiritus,* and all, both the great and the small folk, wept for great joy and happiness. . . . It seemed as if the whole sea swarmed with ants, and the ships burned on the water, and the water itself were aflame with the great joy that they had.

VIII. Extracts from Villehardouin's Memoir of the Fourth Crusade. Goeffry de Villehardouin was a French knight on this crusade, and early in the thirteenth century wrote an elaborate memoir on the subject, from which we make a few selections.

1. The first extract relates the terms that were made with the Doge of Venice by the envoys from the crusaders:

When the term appointed by the Doge was ended, the envoys returned to the palace. Many were the words then spoken which I cannot now rehearse. But this was the conclusion of that parliament: "Signors," said the Doge, "we will tell you the conclusions at which we have arrived, if so be that we can induce our great council and the commons of the land to allow of them; and you, on your part, must consult and see if you can accept them and carry them through.

"We will build transports to carry four thousand five hundred horses, and nine thousand squires, and ships for four thousand five hundred knights, and twenty thousand sergeants of foot. And we will agree also to purvey food for these horses and people during nine months. This is what we undertake to do at the least, on condition that you pay us for each horse four marks, and for each man two marks.

"And the convenants we are now explaining to you, we undertake to keep, wheresoever we may be, for a year, reckoning from the day on which we sail from the port of Venice in the service of God and of Christendom. Now

the sum total of the expenses above named amounts to 85,000 marks.

"And this will we do moreover. For the love of God, we will add to the fleet fifty armed galleys on condition that, so long as we act in company, of all conquests in land or money, whether at sea or on dry ground, we shall have the half, and you the other half. Now consult together to see if you, on your parts, can accept and fulfill these covenants."

The envoys then departed, and said that they would consult together and give their answer on the morrow. They consulted, and talked together that night, and agreed to accept the terms offered. So the next day they appeared before the Doge, and said: "Sire, we are ready to ratify this convenant." The Doge thereon said he would speak of the matter to his people, and, as he found them affected, so would he let the envoys know the issue.

On the morning of the third day, the Doge, who was very wise and valiant, assembled his great council, and the council was of forty men of the wisest that were in the land. And the Doge, by his wisdom and wit, that were very clear and very good, brought them to agreement and approval. Thus he wrought with them; and then with a hundred others, then two hundred, then a thousand, so that at last all consented and approved. Then he assembled well ten thousand of the people in the chapel of St. Mark, the most beautiful chapel that there is, and bade them hear a mass of the Holy Ghost, and pray to God for counsel on the request and messages that had been addressed to them. And the people did so right willingly.

When mass had been said, the Doge desired the envoys to humbly ask the people to assent to the proposed covenant. The envoys came into the church. Curiously were they looked upon by many who had not before had sight of them.

Geoffry of Villehardouin, the Marshal of Champagne, by will and consent of the other envoys, acted as spokesman and said unto them: "Lords, the barons of France,

most high and puissant, have sent us to you; and they cry to you for mercy, that you take pity on Jerusalem, which is in bondage to the Turks, and that, for God's sake, you help to avenge the shame of Christ Jesus. And for this end they have elected to come to you, because they know full well that there is none other people having so great power on the seas, as you and your people. And they commanded us to fall at your feet, and not to rise till you consent to take pity on the Holy Land which is beyond the seas."

Then the six envoys knelt at the feet of the people, weeping many tears. And the Doge and all the others burst into tears of pity and compassion, and cried with one voice, and lifted up their hands, saying: "We consent, we consent!" Then was there so great a noise and tumult that it seemed as if the earth itself were falling to pieces.

And when this great tumult and passion of pity—greater did never any man see—were appeased, the good Doge of Venice, who was very wise and valiant, went up into the reading-desk, and spoke to the people, and said to them: "Signors, behold the honor that God has done you; for the best people in the world have set aside all other people, and chosen you to join them in so high an enterprise as the deliverance of our Lord!"

All the good and beautiful words that the Doge then spoke, I cannot repeat to you. But the end of the matter was, that the covenants were to be made on the following day; and made they were, and devised accordingly.

2. The Doge and other Venetians take the cross:

Then, on a Sunday, was assemblage held in the Church of St. Mark. It was a very high festival, and the people of the land were there, and the most part of the barons and pilgrims.

Before the beginning of High Mass, the Doge of Venice, who bore the name of Henry Dandolo, went up into the reading-desk, and spoke to the people, and said to them: "Signors, you are associated with the most

worthy people in the world, and for the highest enterprise ever undertaken; and I am a man old and feeble, who should have need of rest, and I am sick in body; but I see that no one could command and lead you like myself, who am your lord. If you will consent that I take the sign of the cross to guard and direct you, and that my son remain in my place to guard the land, then shall I go to live or die with you and with the pilgrims."

And when they had heard him, they cried with one voice: "We pray you by God that you consent, and do it, and that you come with us!"

Very great was then the pity and compassion on the part of the people of the land and of the pilgrims; and many were the tears shed, because that worthy and good man would have had so much reason to remain behind, for he was an old man, and albeit his eyes were unclouded, yet he saw naught, having lost his sight through a wound in the head. He was of a great heart. Ah! how little like him were those who had gone to other ports to escape the danger.

Thus he came down from the reading-desk, and went before the altar, and knelt upon his knees greatly weeping. And they sewed the cross on to a great cotton hat, which he wore, in front, because he wished that all men should see it. And the Venetians began to take the cross in great numbers, a great multitude, for up to that day very few had taken the cross. Our pilgrims had much joy in the cross that the Doge took, and were greatly moved, because of the wisdom and the valor of him.

Thus did the Doge take the cross, as you have heard. Then the Venetians began to deliver the ships, the galleys, and the transports to the barons, for departure; but so much time had already been spent since the appointed term, that September drew near (1202).

3. The capture of Galata and the port of Constantinople is described as follows:

The day was fixed on which the host should embark on the ships and transports to take the land by force, and

either live or die. And be it known to you that the enterprise to be achieved was one of the most redoubtable ever attempted. Then did the bishops and clergy speak to the people, and tell them how they must confess, and make each one his testament, seeing that no one knew what might be the will of God concerning him. And this was done right willingly throughout the host, and very piously.

The term fixed was now come; and the knights went on board the transports with their war-horses; and they were fully armed, with their helmets laced, and the horses covered with their housings, and saddled. All the other folk, who were of less consequence in battle, were on the great ships; and the galleys were fully armed and made ready.

The morning was fair a little after the rising of the sun; and the Emperor Alexius stood waiting for them on the other side, with great forces, and everything in order. And the trumpets sound, and every galley takes a transport in tow, so as to reach the other side more readily. None ask who shall go first, but each makes the land as soon as he can. The knights issue from the transports, and leap into the sea up to their waists, fully armed, with helmets laced, and lances in hand; and the good archers, and the good sergeants, and the good cross-bowmen, each in his company, land so soon as they touch ground.

The Greeks made a goodly show of resistance; but when it came to the lowering of the lances, they turned their backs, and went away flying, and abandoned the shore. And be it known to you that never was port more proudly taken. Then began the mariners to open the ports of the transports, and let down the bridges, and take out the horses; and the knights began to mount, and they began to marshal the divisions of the host in due order.

Count Baldwin of Flanders and Hainault, with the advanced guard, rode forward, and the other divisions of the host after him, each in due order of march; and they

came to where the Emperor Alexius had been encamped. But he had turned back towards Constantinople, and left his tents and pavilions standing. And there our people had much spoil.

Our barons were minded to encamp by the port before the tower of Galata, where the chain was fixed that closed the port of Constantinople. And be it known to you, that any one must perforce pass that chain before he could enter into the port. Well did our barons then perceive that if they did not take the tower, and break the chain, they were but as dead men, and in very evil case. So they lodged that night before the tower, and in the Jewry that is called Stenon, where there was a good city, and very rich.

Well did they keep guard during the night; and on the morrow, at the hour of tierce, those who were in the tower of Galata made a sortie, and those who were in Constantinople came to their help in barges; and our people ran to arms. There came first to the onset James of Avesnes and his men on foot; and be it known to you that he was fiercely charged, and wounded by a lance in the face, and in peril of death. And one of his knights, whose name was Nicholas of Jenlain, gat to horse, and came to his lord's rescue, and succored him right well, and so won great honor.

Then a cry was raised in the host, and our people ran together from all sides, and drove back the foe with great fury, so that many were slain and taken. And some of them did not go back to the tower, but ran to the barges by which they had come, and there many were drowned, and some escaped. As to those who went back to the tower, the men of our host pressed them so hard that they could not shut the gate. Then a terrible fight began again at the gate, and our people took it by force, and made prisoners of all those in the tower. Many were there killed and taken.

So was the tower of Galata taken, and the port of Constantinople won by force. Much were those of the host comforted thereby, and much did they praise the Lord

God; and greatly were those of the city discomforted. And on the next day, the ships, the vessels, the galleys and the transports were drawn into the port.

4. The defeat of the crusaders is described in the following extract:

Count Lewis went out first with his battalion, and began to follow after the Comans, and sent to urge the Emperor to come after him. Alas! how ill did they keep to what had been settled the night before! For they ran in pursuit of the Comans for at least two leagues, and joined issue with them, and chased them a long space. And then the Comans turned back upon them, and began to cry out and to shoot.

On our side there were battalions made up of other people than knights, people having too little knowledge of arms, and they began to wax afraid and be discomfited. And Count Lewis, who had been the first to attack, was wounded in two places full sorely; and the Comans and Wallachians began to invade our ranks; and the Count had fallen, and one of his knights, whose name was John of Friaise, dismounted, and set him on his horse. Many were Count Lewis' people who said: "Sir, get you hence, for you are too sorely wounded, and in two places." And he said: "The Lord God forbid that ever I should be reproached with flying from the field, and abandoning the Emperor."

The Emperor, who was in great straits on his side, recalled his people, and he told them that he would not fly, and that they were to remain with him: and well do those who were there present bear witness that never did knight defend himself better with his hands than did the Emperor. This combat lasted a long time. Some were there who did well, and some were there who fled. In the end, for so God suffers misadventures to occur, they were discomfited. There on the field remained the Emperor Baldwin, who never would fly, and Count Lewis; the Emperor Baldwin was taken alive and Count Lewis was slain.

Alas! how woeful was our loss! There was lost the Bishop Peter of Bethleem, and Stephen of the Perche, brother to Count Geoffry, and Renaud of Montmirail, brother of the Count of Nevers, and Matthew of Wallincourt, and Robert of Ronsoi, John of Friaise, Walter of Neuilli, Ferri of Yerres, John his brother, Eustace of Heumont, John his brother, Baldwin of Neuville, and many more of whom the book does not here make mention. Those who were able to escape, they came back flying to the camp.

When Geoffry the Marshal of Champagne, who was keeping guard at one of the gates of the city, saw this he issued from the camp as soon as he could, with all the men that were with him, and gave command to Manasses of l'Isle, who was on guard at another gate, that he should follow after him. And he rode forth with all his force at full speed, and in full array, to meet the fugitives, and the fugitives all rallied round him. And Manasses of l'Isle followed as soon as he was able, with his men, and joined himself to him, so that together they formed a very strong body; and all those who came out of the rout, and whom they could stop, were taken into their ranks.

The rout was thus stayed between Nones and Vespers. But the most part of the fugitives were so afeared that they fled right before them till they came to the tents and quarters. Thus was the rout stayed, as you have heard; and the Comans, with the Wallachians and Greeks, who were in full chase, ceased their pursuit. But these still galled our force with their bows and arrows, and the men of our force kept still with their faces turned towards them. Thus did both sides remain till nightfall, when the Comans and Wallachians began to retire.

Then did Geoffry of Villehardouin, the Marshal of Champagne and Roumania, summon to the camp the Doge of Venice, who was an old man and saw naught, but very wise and brave and vigorous; and he asked the Doge to come to him there where he stood with his men, holding the field; and the Doge did so. And when the

Marshal saw him, he called him into council, aside, all alone, and said to him: "Lord, you see the misadventure that has befallen us. We have lost the Emperor Baldwin and Count Lewis, and the larger part of our people, and of the best. Now let us bethink ourselves how to save what is left. For if God does not take pity of them, we are but lost."

And in the end they settled it thus: that the Doge would return to the camp, and put heart into the people, and order that every one should arm and remain quiet in his tent or pavilion; and that Geoffry the Marshal would remain in full order of battle before the camp till it was night, so that their enemies might not see the host move; and that when it was night all would move from before the city; the Doge of Venice would go before, and Geoffry the Marshal would form the rear-guard, with those who were with him.

Thus they waited till it was night; and when it was night the Doge of Venice left the camp, as had been arranged, and Geoffry the Marshal formed the rear-guard. And they departed at foot pace, and took with them all their people mounted and dismounted, the wounded as well those who were whole—they left not one behind. And they journeyed toward a city that lies upon the sea, called Rodosto, and that was full three days' journey distant. So they departed from Adrianople, as you have heard; and this adventure befell in the year of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ twelve hundred and five.

And in the night that the host left Adrianople, it happened that a company started to get to Constantinople earlier, and by a more direct way; and they were greatly blamed therefor. In this company was a certain Count from Lombardy named Gerard, who came from the land of the marquis, and Odo of Ham, who was lord of a castle called Ham in Vermandois, and John of Maseroles, and many others to the number of twenty-five knights, whom the book does not name. And they went away so fast after the discomfiture, which had taken place on the Thursday evening, that they came to Constantinople on

the Saturday night, though it was ordinarily a good five days' journey. And they told the news to the Cardinal Peter of Capua, who was there by the authority of Innocent Pope of Rome, and to Conon of Bethune, who guarded the city, and to Miles the Brabant, and to the other good men in the city. And you must know that these were greatly affeared, and thought of a certainty that all the rest, who had been left before Adrianople, were lost, for they had no news of them.

IX. The Eighth and Ninth Crusades. From the time of the Fourth Crusade there was scarcely a year that did not see some body of troops marching toward Jerusalem. Our purpose here is merely to put these great movements before us as a background for reading the literature of Europe, in which there will be frequent and often extended references in every country.

In 1248 the crusade usually known as the eighth was begun by Louis VIII (St. Louis) of France, who captured the city of Damietta in Egypt, but not long afterward he and his entire army were taken by the Moslems and compelled to pay a heavy ransom for their freedom. St. Louis, clothed in sackcloth, with ashes upon his head, made a pilgrimage to Nazareth, but would not look upon Jerusalem, the Holy City, which from military incapacity he had been unable to liberate.

More than twenty years later St. Louis took up the cross again in the Ninth Crusade, which was an utter failure; while encamped upon the site of ancient Carthage a plague broke out, and among its victims was the good King himself.

X. Pictures from Joinville's "Memoirs." Jean, Sire de Joinville, was a seigneur of Champagne who accompanied St. Louis upon his crusade. In the year 1309, when he was eighty-five years old, he completed his *Chronicles* of the crusades, and the narrative of the garrulous old man is one of the most charming things in early French literature. Devoted to his King, but not blind to his faults, he writes lovingly and minutely of his sainted leader and fills his story with anecdotes, descriptions of the manners and customs of the strange people he met, stops to tell of the tricks of a tumbler, of a fossil he found, and of the thousand and one little incidents of the long and arduous expedition. On the last crusade Joinville refused to go, and warned his King against it, without avail. We may return to the narrative under another topic, but now we can only select a few pictures which will perhaps bring us closer to the real spirit of the crusades than anything we have yet said.

1. Fording a river and the death of a famous knight:

When the King saw this he called all his barons into council; and they agreed that they could not build a causeway on which to pass over against the Saracens, because our people were unable to dam up as much on our side as the Saracens could excavate on the other.

Then did constable my Lord Imbert of Beaujeu say to the King that a Bedouin had come to him and told him that he could show us a good ford, provided we gave him five hundred besants. The King agreed that the besants should be given him, provided he (on his part) proved

From Painting by Cabanel, Panthéon, Paris

ST. LOUIS IN JERUSALEM

the truth of what he promised. The constable thereon spoke to the Bedouin; but the Bedouin said he would not show the ford unless the moneys were first placed in his hands. So it was agreed that the besants should be given to him; and given to him they were.

The King decided that the Duke of Burgundy and the men of note from oversea who were with the host, should guard the camp, so that no harm might come to it; and that the King and his three brothers should pass the ford at the place which the Bedouin was to show them. So was the matter settled, and preparation made to pass over on Shrove Tuesday (8th February, 1250), on which day we came to the Bedouin's ford. There, as the dawn of the day was appearing, we collected from all points; and when we were ready, we went to the stream and our horses began to swim. When we got to the middle of the stream, we touched ground and our horses found footing; and on the other bank of the stream were full three hundred Saracens, all mounted on their horses.

Then said I to my people: "Sirs, look only to the left hand, and let each draw thither; the banks are wet and soft and the horses are falling upon their riders and drowning them." And it was sooth that some were drowned in the crossing, and among others was drowned my Lord John of Orleans, who carried a banner *vivre* (with waved lines). Thereupon we moved in such sort that we turned up the stream, and found a dry way, and so passed over, praise God! that not one of us fell; and as soon as we had passed over, the Turks fled.

It had been so ordered that the Templars were to form the vanguard, and that the Count of Artois should have the second division after the Templars. Now it so happened that as soon as the Count of Artois had passed over the stream, he and all his people fell upon the Turks, who fled before them. The Templars notified to him that he was doing them great despite in that while his place was to come after them, he was going before; and they besought him to suffer them to go before, as had been arranged by the King. Now it chanced that the Count

of Artois did not venture to answer them, because of my Lord Foucand of Merle, who held the bridle of his horse; and this Foucand of Merle was a very good knight, but heard naught of what the Templars were saying to the Count, seeing that he was deaf, and was crying, "Out on them, out on them!" Now when the Templars saw this, they thought they would be shamed if they suffered the Count to outride them; so they struck spurs into their horses, helter-skelter, and chased the Turks, and the Turks fled before them, right through the town of Mansourah and into the fields beyond towards Babylon.

When they thought to return, the Turks threw beams and blocks of wood upon them in the streets, which were narrow. There were killed the Count of Artois, the Lord of Couci, who was called Raoul, and so many other knights that the number was reckoned at three hundred. The Temple, as the master has since told me, lost there fourteen score men-at-arms, and all mounted.

2. A description of the Bedouins:

As it pertains to my subject, I will here tell you what kind of people the Bedouins are. The Bedouins do not believe in Mahomet, but they believe in the law of Ali, who was uncle to Mahomet; and so also believes the Old Man of the Mountain, who entertains the Assassins. And they believe that when a man dies for his lord, or in any good cause, his soul goes into another body, better and more comfortable; and for this reason the Assassins are not greatly concerned if they are killed when carrying out the commands of the Old Man of the Mountain. But of the Old Man of the Mountain we will say no more at this present, but speak only about the Bedouins.

The Bedouins live neither in villages, nor cities, nor castles, but lie always out in the fields; and they establish their households, their wives and their children, at night, and by day when the weather is bad, in a sort of lodging that they make with the hoops of barrels tied to poles, like ladies' chariots; and over these hoops they throw sheepskins, called skins of Damascus, cured with

alum. The Bedouins themselves wear great pelisses that cover the whole of their body, their legs, and their feet.

When it rains in the evening, or the weather is foul by night, they wrap themselves round in their cloaks and take the bits out of their horses' mouths, and leave their horses to browse near. When the morrow comes, they spread out their cloaks to the sun, and rub and cure them; nor does it afterwards appear as if the cloaks had been wetted. Their belief is that no one can die save on the day appointed, and for this reason they will not wear armor; and when they wish to curse their children they say to them: "Be thou accursed like a Frank, who puts on armor for fear of death!" In battle they carry nothing but sword and spear.

Nearly all are clothed in a surplice, like priests. Their heads are all bound round with cloths, that go beneath their chins, wherefore they are an ugly people, and hideous to behold, and the hairs of their heads and of their beards are all black. They live on the milk of their beasts, and purchase, in the plains belonging to wealthy men, the pasturage on which their beasts subsist. Their number no man can tell; for they are to be found in the kingdom of Egypt, in the kingdom of Jerusalem, and in all the other lands of the Saracens, and of the misbelievers—to whom they pay, every year, a great tribute.

I have seen in this country, since I came back from the land oversea, certain disloyal Christians, who hold the faith of the Bedouins, and say that no man can die save on the day appointed; and their belief is so disloyal that it amounts to saying that God has no power to help us. For those would indeed be fools who served God if we did not think He had power to prolong our lives, and to preserve us from evil and mischance. And in Him ought we to believe, seeing He has power to do all things.

3. The capture of the King:

Now I will leave off speaking of this matter, and tell you how the King was taken, as he himself related it to

me. He told me how he had left his own division and placed himself, he and my lord Geoffry of Sargines, in the division that was under my Lord Gaucher of Chatillon, who commanded the rear-guard.

And the King related to me that he was mounted on a little courser covered with a housing of silk; and he told me that of all his knights and sergeants there only remained behind with him my Lord Geoffry of Sargines, who brought the King to a little village, there where the King was taken; and as the King related to me, my Lord Geoffry of Sargines defended him from the Saracens as a good servitor defends his lord's drinking-cup from flies; for every time that the Saracens approached, he took his spear, which he had placed between himself and the bow of his saddle, and put it to his shoulder, and ran upon them, and drove them away from the King.

And thus he brought the King to the little village; and they lifted him into a house, and laid him, almost as one dead, in the lap of a burgher-woman of Paris, and thought he would not last till night. Thither came my Lord Philip of Montfort, and said to the King that he saw the emir with whom he had treated of the truce, and, if the King so willed, he would go to him, and renew the negotiation for a truce in the manner that the Saracens desired. The King begged him to go, and said he was right willing. So my Lord Philip went to the Saracen; and the Saracen had taken off his turban from his head, and took off the ring from his finger in token that he would faithfully observe the truce.

Meanwhile, a very great mischance happened to our people; for a traitor sergeant, whose name was Marcel, began to cry to our people: "Yield, lord knights, for the King commands you, and do not cause the King to be slain!" All thought that the King had so commanded, and gave up their swords to the Saracens. The emir saw that the Saracens were bringing in our people prisoners, so he said to my Lord Philip that it was not fitting that he should grant a truce to our people, for he saw very well that they were already prisoners.

So it happened to my Lord Philip that whereas all our people were taken captive, yet was not he so taken, because he was an envoy. But there is an evil custom in the land of paynimry that when the King sends envoys to the soldan, or the soldan to the King, and the King dies, or the soldan, before the envoys' return, then the envoys, from whithersoever they may come, and whether Christians or Saracens, are made prisoners and slaves.

4. The suffering of the Queen at Damietta:

Now you have heard, in what has gone before, of the great tribulations which the King and all of us endured. From such tribulations the Queen did not escape, as you shall presently be told. For, three days before she was brought to bed, came the news that the King was taken; with which news she was so affrighted that, as oft as she slept in her bed, it seemed to her that the chamber was full of Saracens, and she cried out, "Help! help!" And so that the child she bore in her body should not perish, she caused an ancient knight, of eighty years, to lie near her bed, and hold her by the hand; and every time she so cried out, he said: "Lady, have no fear, for I am here."

Before she was brought to bed she caused every one to leave her chamber, save this knight only, and knelt before him, and besought him to do her a service; and the knight consented, and gave her his oath. And she said: "I ask of you, by the troth you have now pledged me, that if the Saracens take this city, you will cut off my head before I fall into their hands." And the knight replied: "Be assured that I shall do so willingly; for I was already fully minded to kill you or ever you should be taken."

The Queen was brought to bed of a son, who had for name John; and they called him Tristram for the great sorrow and anguish that were about his birth. On the very day that she was brought to bed, she was told that those of Pisa, and Genoa, and the other free cities, were minded to flee away; and on the day following she had

them all called before her bed, so that the chamber was quite full, and said to them: "Lords, for God's sake do not leave this city; for you see that if this city were lost, my lord the King would be utterly lost, and all those who have been taken captive with him. And if this moves you not, yet take pity upon the poor weak creature lying here, and wait till I am recovered."

And they replied: "Lady, what can we do? For we are dying of hunger in this city." And she told them that for famine they need not depart, "for," said she, "I will cause all the food in this city to be bought, and will keep you all from henceforth at the King's charges." They advised together, and came back to her, and said they consented to remain right willingly. Then the Queen—whom may God have in His grace!—caused all the food in the city to be bought at a cost of three hundred and sixty thousand *livres* and more. Ere due time she had to rise from her bed, because the city must needs be surrendered to the Saracens. Then the Queen came to Acre to await the King.

5. Gleemen visit the camp:

With the Prince came three gleemen from Great Armenia. They were brothers and were going to Jerusalem on pilgrimage; and they had three horns, and these horns were so devised that the sound came from the side of their faces. When they began to sound their horns, you would have said it was the voice of swans coming from a mere; for they made the sweetest music and the most melodious, so that it was marvelous to hear them. They all three also leapt marvelously; for a mat was put under their feet, and they made a somersault standing, so that their feet came back upon the mat. Two made the somersault with their heads backwards, and the eldest also; and when they caused him to jump with his head forward, he signed himself with the cross, for he was afeared lest he should break his neck as he turned.

6. Joinville is presented with a fossil:

While the King was at Sayette they brought him a stone that broke in flakes, the most marvelous stone in the world; and when you scaled off one of the flakes, you found, between the two stones, the form of a sea-fish. The fish was of stone; but it wanted nothing in form, eyes, bones, nor color, nor anything else, to make it otherwise than if it were alive. The King gave me one of these stones, and I found therein a tench, brown of color, and of such fashion as a tench ought to be.

7. The love of St. Louis for the poor:

He asked me if I washed the feet of the poor on Holy Thursday; and I answered him "No," for such an act appeared to me unseemly. And he told me I should not hold the act in disdain, seeing that God had so done. "Very unwillingly then would you do what the King of England does—who washes the feet of lepers, and kisses them."

Before he lay down in his bed he would cause his children to come to him, and bring to their minds the deeds of good kings and good emperors, telling them it was of such men they should take example. And he would bring to their minds also the deeds of great men who were wicked, and by their ill-living, and their rapine, and their avarice, had brought their kingdoms to ruin. "And these things," he would say, "I bring to your minds, so that you may avoid them, and that God's anger be not kindled against you." He made them learn the hours of our Lady, and say before him the hours of the day, so as to accustom them to hear the hours when they ruled over their own lands.

The King was such a large alms-giver that wherever he went in his kingdom he caused money to be given to the poor churches, to the lazar houses, to the almshouses, to the hospitals, and to the poor gentlemen and gentlewomen. Every day he gave food to a great number of poor folk, beside those who ate in his chamber; and oft-

times have I seen him cutting their bread and giving them drink.

8. Sickness and death of the King:

Of the King's journey to Tunis will I say and tell nothing, forasmuch as, thank God! I was not there, and have no wish to put in my book anything of which I am not certain. So we will speak only of our saintly King, and tell how, after he had landed at Tunis, before the castle of Carthage, he fell sick of a flux in the stomach, and Philip, his eldest son, was sick of a quartan fever, and of the same flux in the stomach as the King; and the King took to his bed, and felt that he must shortly pass out of this world into the other.

Then he called my Lord Philip, his son, and commanded him, as if by testament, to observe all the teachings he had left him, which are hereinafter set down in French, and were, so it is said, written with the King's own saintly hand:

"Fair son, the first thing I would teach thee is to set thine heart to love God; for unless he love God none can be saved. Keep thyself from doing aught that is displeasing to God, that is to say, from mortal sin. Contrariwise thou shouldst suffer every manner of torment rather than commit a mortal sin.

"If God send thee adversity, receive it in patience, and give thanks to our Savior, and bethink thee that thou hast deserved it, and that He will make it turn to thine advantage. If He send thee prosperity, then thank Him humbly, so that thou become not worse from pride, or any other cause, when thou oughtest to be better. For we should not fight against God with His own gifts.

"Confess thyself often, and choose for confessor a right worthy man who knows how to teach thee what to do, and what not to do; and bear thyself in such sort that thy confessor and thy friends shall dare to reprove thee for thy misdoings. Listen to the services of holy Church devoutly, and without chattering; and pray to God with thy heart and with thy lips, and especially at mass when

the consecration takes place. Let thy heart be tender and full of pity towards those who are poor, miserable and afflicted; and comfort and help them to the utmost of thy power.

"Maintain the good customs of thy realm, and abolish the bad. Be not covetous against thy people; and do not burden them with taxes and imposts save when thou art in great need.

"If thou hast any great burden weighing upon thy heart, tell it to thy confessor or to some right worthy man who is not full of vain words. Then shalt thou be able to bear it the more easily.

"See that thou hast in thy company men, whether religious or lay, who are right worthy, and loyal, and not full of covetousness, and confer with them oft; and fly and eschew the company of the wicked. Hearken willingly to the Word of God, and keep it in thine heart; and seek diligently after prayers and indulgences. Love all that is good and profitable, and hate all that is evil wheresoever it may be.

"Let none be so bold as to say before thee any word that would draw and move to sin, or so bold as to speak evil behind another's back for pleasure's sake; nor do thou suffer any word in disparagement of God and of His saints to be spoken in thy presence. Give often thanks to God for all the good things He has bestowed upon thee.

"In order to do justice and right to thy subjects, be upright and firm, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, but always to what is just; and do thou maintain the cause of the poor until such time as the truth is made clear. And if any one has an action against thee, make full inquisition until thou knowest the truth; for thus shall thy counselors judge the more boldly according to the truth, whether for thee or against.

"If thou holdest aught that belongeth to another, whether by thine own act or the act of thy predecessors, and the matter be certain, make restoration without delay. If the matter be doubtful, cause inquiry to be made by wise men, diligently and promptly.

"Give heed that thy servants and thy subjects live under thee in peace and uprightness. Especially maintain the good cities and commons of thy realm in the same estate and with the same franchises as they enjoyed under thy predecessors; and if there be aught to amend, amend and set it right, and keep them in thy favor and love. For because of the power and wealth of the great cities, thine own subjects, and specially thy peers and thy barons, and foreigners also, will fear to undertake aught against thee.

"Love and honor all persons belonging to holy Church, and see that no one take away, or diminish, the gifts and alms made to them by thy predecessors. It is related of King Philip, my grandfather, that one of his counselors once told him that those of holy Church did him much harm and damage, in that they deprived him of his rights, and diminished his jurisdiction, and that it was a great marvel that he suffered it; and the good King replied that he believed this might well be so, but he had regard to the benefits and courtesies that God had bestowed upon him, and so thought it better to abandon some of his rights than to have any contention with the people of holy Church.

"To thy father and mother thou shalt give honor and reverence, and thou shalt obey their commandments. Bestow the benefices of holy Church on persons who are righteous and of a clean life, and do it on the advice of men of worth and uprightness.

"Beware of undertaking a war against any Christian prince without great deliberation; and if it has to be undertaken, see that thou do no hurt to holy Church, and to those who have done thee no injury. If wars and dissensions arise among thy subjects, see that thou appease them as soon as thou art able.

"Use diligence to have good provosts and bailiffs, and inquire often of them, and of those of thy household, how they conduct themselves, and if there be found in them any vice of inordinate covetousness, or falsehood, or trickery. Labor to free thy land from all vile iniquity,

and especially strike down with all thy power evil swearing and heresy. See to it that the expense of thy household be reasonable.

"Finally, my very dear son, cause masses to be sung for my soul, and prayers to be said throughout thy realm; and give to me a special share and full part in all the good thou doest. Fair dear son, I give thee all the blessings that a good father can give to his son. And may the blessed Trinity and all the saints keep and defend thee from all evils; and God give thee grace to do His will always, so that He be honored in thee, and that thou and I may both, after this mortal life is ended, be with Him together, and praise Him everlastingly. Amen."

When the good King had so taught his son, my Lord Philip, the infirmity that was upon him began to grow apace; and he asked for the sacraments of holy Church, and received them, being clear of thought and of sound understanding, as appeared duly, for when they anointed him with oil and said the seven Psalms, he repeated the verses in turn.

And I heard my Lord, the Count of Alencon, his son, tell that when the King came near to death he called upon the saints to help and succor him, and especially upon my Lord St. James, saying St. James's orison, which begins: "*Esto, Domine,*" that is to say, "O God, be the sanctifier and guardian of thy people." Then he called to his aid my Lord St. Denis of France, saying St. Denis's orison, which is to this effect: "Lord God, grant that we may despise the prosperity of this world, and not stand in fear of any adversity."

And I then heard my Lord of Alencon—on whom God have mercy!—relate how his father called on my Lady St. Genevieve. After that, the saintly King caused himself to be laid on a bed covered with ashes, and put his hands across his breast, and, looking towards heaven, rendered up his spirit to our Creator; and it was at the same hour that the Son of God died upon the cross for the world's salvation.

A piteous thing, and worthy of tears, is the death of this saintly Prince, who kept and guarded his realm so holily and loyally, and gave alms there so largely, and set therein so many fair foundations. And like as the scribe who, writing his book, illuminates it with gold and azure, so did the said King illuminate his realm with the fair abbeys that he built, and the great number of almshouses, and the houses for Preachers and Franciscans, and other religious orders, as named above.

On the day after the feast of St. Bartholomew the Apostle did the good King Louis pass out of this world, and in the year of the Incarnation of our Savior, the year of grace 1270 (the 25th August). And his bones were put in a casket, and borne thence, and buried at St. Denis in France, where he had chosen his place of sepulture; and in the place where they were buried God has sithence performed many fair miracles in his honor, and by his merit.

XI. The Children's Crusade. Historically the crusade of the children was of little importance, but so astonishing an event demands notice here, especially as in literature so frequent allusion is made to it. In 1212 certain fanatics preaching in France and Germany roused the children of those countries into the belief that upon them rested the burden of reclaiming the Holy Sepulcher from pagan hands. Other crusades had failed, it was thought, because of the sinfulness of those who made them and because of the dissensions which arose among them; this would succeed because of the purity and innocence of little children. Nothing could restrain the vast crowds that flocked to the places of rendezvous; the commands of parents, the arguments of

From Engraving by Doré

THE CHILDREN S CRUSADE

friends, ordinary punishments and even imprisonment failed to quench their ardor or restrain them from their purpose. It is said that not fewer than fifty thousand children, many of them not over twelve years of age, answered the mistaken call in Germany alone.

The German children marched south toward the Mediterranean, with disease and perils of every sort dogging their footsteps. Thieves and the vicious of all kinds preyed upon them, and it was a hungry, dispirited, suffering remnant that reached the gates of Genoa, hoping and believing the Mediterranean would open before them and they might march dry-shod over the few miles that in their ignorance they thought separated them from Jerusalem. The Genoese, fearing to render them any assistance in their mad project, turned them back over the weary way which few trod again in safety. Disgraced, degraded by suffering and vice, the great majority fell by the wayside.

More pitiful, if possible, was the fate of the French contingent, which, perhaps thirty thousand strong, reached Marseilles. Here unprincipled persons, seeing the opportunity for gain, gathered a fleet and promised to take the childish crusaders to the Holy Land without charge. As many as could crowded the ships and, burning with religious fervor, set sail with joyous anticipation, for they saw victory in their little hands. However, disaster came quickly, for some of the ships were wrecked on the Isle of St. Peter and all on board per-

ished, while the other ships, reaching Alexandria in safety, led to an even worse fate their innocent young passengers, all of whom were sold to the Turks, where they lived wretched lives of slavery or died from the cruel tortures imposed upon them by their relentless Mohammedan masters.

XII. The End of the Crusades. As efforts to free Palestine from the Turks the Crusades had all failed; men found that their real interests lay nearer home, and while they still retained the hatred of the Moslems and the love of the holy places, yet they abandoned Palestine to the undisturbed possession of the Turks and returned to Europe to find new outlets for their energies. After the middle of the fourteenth century there were no crusades, though down to the middle of the seventeenth occasional attempts were made to stir again the dead crusading spirit.

Failures as they were from one point of view, yet they brought about far-reaching changes. Upon the morals of the nations the effects were both beneficial and extremely deleterious: excess of fanaticism brought cruelty and persecution home to Europe; the unrestrained lives of the pilgrims bred the vices that everywhere stain the pages of our records; the idea of remission of sins for a pilgrimage brought a notion of a similar forgiveness that might be purchased nearer home; but, against this worked that holy enthusiasm in a great purpose that tended to self-denial and a purer life.

It is impossible to estimate the intellectual and material effects the Crusades had upon the life of Europe. The Christians gained a broader outlook upon the world, were brought face to face with the survivals of Greek culture, science, art and architecture as it had been modified by the Eastern people, and the new learning was directly instrumental in bringing out the great intellectual revival of the sixteenth century. Commercially, the results were more direct and more easily recognized, for an extensive trade was immediately organized which brought into Europe those varied products of the East which the crusaders had learned to use and to esteem. Such extensive operations demanded a medium of exchange, and a crude but useful system of international money and banking sprang into existence. For years the *besant, bezant* or *byzantine* of the East, a round piece of silver or gold without any impression, worth in silver about seventy cents, was the current coin throughout Europe. The political and social influences were equally important, for they tended to the centralization of power in the hands of kings, showed the weakness of the feudal system, enabled the king by the use of money to collect his taxes without resorting to personal service, while the extended commerce built up the cities and created a class of townsmen who demanded a position equal to that of the knights and the clergy and who possessed the money to pay for it.

The more tolerant views of the present day have been expressed by Bishop Stubbs in his *Lectures on Medieval and Modern History:*

The Crusades are not, in my mind, either the popular delusions that our cheap literature has determined them to be, nor Papal conspiracies against kings and peoples, as they appear to the Protestant controversialist, nor the savage outbreaks of expiring barbarism thirsting for blood and plunder, nor volcanic explosions of religious intolerance. I believe them to have been, in their deep sources, and in the minds of their best champions, and in the main tendency of their results, capable of ample justification. They were the first great effort of medieval life to go beyond the pursuit of selfish and isolated ambitions; they were the trial-feat of the young world, essaying to use, to the glory of God and the benefit of man, the arms of its new knighthood. That they failed in their direct object is only what may be alleged against almost every design which the Great Disposer of events has molded to help the world's progress; for the world has grown wise by the experience of failure, rather than by the winnings of high aims. That the good they did was largely leavened with evil may be said of every war that has ever been waged; that bad men rose by them while good men fell, is and must be true wherever and whenever the race is to the swift and the battle to the strong. But that, in the end, they were a benefit to the world no one who reads can doubt; and that in their course they brought out a love for all that is heroic in human nature—the love of freedom, the honor of prowess, sympathy with sorrow, perseverance to the last, and patient endurance without hope—the chronicles of the age abundantly prove; proving, moreover, that it was by the experience of those times that the former of those virtues were realized, and presented to posterity.... The history of the Crusades has always had for me an interest that quite rivals all the interest I could take in the history of the Greeks and Romans.

CHAPTER III

MEDIEVAL MYTHS

INTRODUCTION. During the Middle Ages a number of extremely curious myths and legends sprang into existence and were disseminated through Europe. In many instances it is not possible to trace their origin, although they have been a matter of much speculation and investigation. Many of them are so frequently referred to in the literature of nations, and are the basis of so many poems, tales, dramas, etc., that a general discussion of them at this point seems advisable. Not all were equally prevalent in all countries, but all that we shall mention were generally credited and have since been treated in various ways, according to the effect they happened to have upon the writers. It is not our purpose to account for the origin of these

strange myths and legends nor to discuss their growth and distribution, but merely to give enough information so that the reader may meet allusions with intelligence. S. Baring-Gould, an English divine, has written many books on folklore, mythology, ancient manners, customs, etc., and to his book *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages* we are much indebted for the materials used in the preparation of this chapter.

II. The Wandering Jew. The myth of the Wandering Jew belongs to the class which has arisen from an attempt to understand the limitations of human life, a feeling that some human beings there must be who have lived beyond those limits either as a reward for superior sanctity or as a punishment for some unpardonably wicked act. John the Divine sleeps at Ephesus with the ground heaving above his breast; the monk of Hildesheim, wondering how with God a thousand years could be as yesterday, heard a bird singing gleefully for three minutes, but awakened to find that three hundred years had flown; Merlin sleeps in an old tree bound by the spells of Vivien; Charlemagne and Barbarossa wait crowned and armed in the heart of the mountain till the Fatherland is released from despotism; the Captain of the Phantom Ship sails on forever because he vowed he would double the Cape whether God willed it or not; and the Wandering Jew continues his aimless journeys till Christ comes again.

No two versions of the tale exactly agree, but from its first mention in 1228 until the latter part of the seventeenth century there are reports from all countries telling of the visits of this wonderful personage. The manuscript in the abby of St. Albans (1228) relates the visit of an Armenian bishop, who first told the story of the Wandering Jew:

At the time of the suffering of Jesus Christ, He was seized by the Jews, and led into the hall of judgment before Pilate, the governor, that He might be judged by him on the accusation of the Jews; and Pilate, finding no cause for adjudging Him to death, said to them, "Take Him and judge Him according to your law;" the shouts of the Jews, however, increasing, he, at their request, released unto them Barabbas, and delivered Jesus to them to be crucified. When, therefore, the Jews were dragging Jesus forth, and had reached the door, Cartaphilus, a porter of the hall, in Pilate's service, as Jesus was going out of the door, impiously struck Him on the back with his hand, and said in mockery, "Go quicker, Jesus, go quicker; why do you loiter?" and Jesus, looking back on him with a severe countenance, said to him, "I am going, and you will wait till I return." And according as our Lord said, this Cartaphilus is still awaiting His return. At the time of our Lord's suffering he was thirty years old, and when he attains the age of a hundred years, he always returns to the same age as he was when our Lord suffered. After Christ's death, when the Catholic faith gained ground, this Cartaphilus was baptized by Ananias (who also baptized the Apostle Paul), and was called Joseph.

Another version of the tale appeared in 1547, when the Wandering Jew was seen in Europe by Doctor Paul von Eitzen, bishop of Schleswig, who tells the story thus:

Now when Doctor Paul v. Eitzen heard this with profound astonishment, on account of its incredible novelty, he inquired further, in order that he might obtain more accurate information. Then the man answered, that he had lived in Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion of Christ, whom he had regarded as a deceiver of the people and a heretic; he had seen Him with his own eyes, and had done his best, along with others, to bring this deceiver, as he regarded Him, to justice, and to have Him put out of the way. When the sentence had been pronounced by Pilate, Christ was about to be dragged past his house; then he ran home, and called together his household to have a look at Christ, and see what sort of a person He was.

This having been done, he had his little child on his arm, and was standing in his doorway to have a sight of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As, then, Christ was led by, bowed under the weight of the heavy cross, He tried to rest a little, and stood still a moment; but the shoemaker, in zeal and rage, and for the sake of obtaining credit among the other Jews, drove the Lord Christ forward, and told Him to hasten on His way. Jesus obeying, looked at him, and said, "I shall stand and rest, but thou shalt go till the last day." At these words the man set down the child; and unable to remain where he was, he followed Christ, and saw how cruelly He was crucified, how He suffered, how He died. As soon as this had taken place, it came upon him suddenly that he could no more return to Jerusalem, nor see again his wife and child, but must go forth into foreign lands, one after another, like a mournful pilgrim. Now, when, years after, he returned to Jerusalem, he found it ruined and utterly razed, so that not one stone was left standing on another; and he could not recognize former localities.

He believes that it is God's purpose in thus driving him about in miserable life, and preserving him undying, to present him before the Jews at the end, as a living token, so that the godless and unbelieving may

remember the death of Christ, and be turned to repentance. For his part he would well rejoice were God in heaven to release him from this vale of tears.

No more impressive use of the legend has been made than that of Gustave Doré, who bases a series of marvelous illustrations on the ghastly events of the poor Jew's wanderings.

III. Prester John. That somewhere in the interior of Asia was a vast domain ruled by Prester John, a Christian priest and king, was widely believed from the twelfth century, when it was expected that he was ready to come to the assistance of the crusaders, after having broken the Moslem power. Popes sent embassies to him and learned the falsity of the notion, but the idea persisted, only the location of his empire was changed from Asia to Africa or some other inaccessible place in the Orient.

Sir John Mandeville, writing of his travels about the middle of the fourteenth century, gives the following circumstantial account of the conversion of John:

So it befelle, that this Emperour cam, with a Cristene knyght with him, into a chirche in Egypt: and it was Saterday in Wyttson woke. And the bishop made orders. And he beheld and listened the servyse fulle tentyfly: and he asked the Cristene knyght, what men of degree thei scholden ben, that the prelate had before him. And the knyght answerede and seyde, that thei scholde ben prestes. And then the Emperour seyde, that he wolde no longer ben clept kyng ne emperour, but preest; and that he wolde have the name of the first preest, that wente out of the chirche; and his name was John. And so evere more sittiens, he is clept Prestre John.

Near the middle of the thirteenth century an extraordinary document appeared that created great excitement wherever it was seen. It purported to be a letter from this same Prester John addressed to the Emperor Manuel Comnenus, to Frederick, the German Emperor, and to the kings of other Christian countries, and it at once became the theme for romance and the songs of minstrel and troubadour. After the customary greetings and some minor messages, the letter proceeds:

Should you desire to learn the greatness and excellency of our Exaltedness and of the land subject to our scepter, then hear and believe:—I, Presbyter Johannes, the Lord of Lords, surpass all under heaven in virtue, in riches, and in power; seventy-two kings pay us tribute... In the three Indies our Magnificence rules, and our land extends beyond India, where rests the body of the holy Apostle Thomas; it reaches towards the sunrise over the wastes, and it trends towards deserted Babylon near the tower of Babel. Seventy-two provinces, of which only a few are Christian, serve us. Each has its own king, but all are tributary to us.

Our land is the home of elephants, dromedaries, camels, crocodiles, meta-collinarum, cametennus, tensevetes, wild asses, white and red lions, white bears, white merles, crickets, griffins, tigers, lamias, hyenas, wild horses, wild oxen and wild men, men with horns, one-eyed, men with eyes before and behind, centaurs, fauns, satyrs, pygmies, forty-ell high giants, Cyclopses, and similar women; it is the home, too, of the phoenix, and of nearly all living animals. We have some people subject to us who feed on the flesh of men and of prematurely born animals, and who never fear death. When any of these people die, their friends and relations eat him ravenously, for they regard it as a main duty to munch

human flesh.... We lead them at our pleasure against our foes, and neither man nor beast is left undevoured, if our Majesty gives the requisite permission. And when all our foes are eaten, then we return with our hosts home again. These accursed fifteen nations will burst forth from the four quarters of the earth at the end of the world, in the times of Antichrist, and overrun all the abodes of the Saints as well as the great city Rome, which, by the way, we are prepared to give to our son who will be born, along with all Italy, Germany, the two Gauls, Britain and Scotland. We shall also give him Spain and all the land as far as the icy sea. The nations to which I have alluded, according to the words of the prophet, shall not stand in the judgment, on account of their offensive practices, but will be consumed to ashes by a fire which will fall on them from heaven.

Our land streams with honey, and is overflowing with milk. In one region grows no poisonous herb, nor does a querulous frog ever quack in it, no scorpion exists, nor does the serpent glide amongst the grass, nor can any poisonous animals exist in it, or injure any one.

Among the heathen, flows through a certain province the river Indus; encircling Paradise, it spreads its arms in manifold windings through the entire province. Here are found the emeralds, sapphires, carbuncles, topazes, chrysolites, onyxes, beryls, sardius, and other costly stones. Here grows the plant Assidos, which, when worn by any one, protects him from the evil spirit, forcing it to state its business and name; consequently the foul spirits keep out of the way there. In a certain land subject to us, all kinds of pepper is gathered, and is exchanged for corn and bread, leather and cloth.... At the foot of Mount Olympus bubbles up a spring which changes its flavor hour by hour, night and day, and the spring is scarcely three days' journey from Paradise, out of which Adam was driven. If any one has tasted thrice of the fountain, from that day he will feel no fatigue, but will as long as he lives be as a man of thirty years. Here are found the small stones called Nudiosi, which, if borne

about the body, prevent the sight from waxing feeble, and restore it where it is lost. The more the stone is looked at, the keener becomes the sight. In our territory is a certain waterless sea, consisting of tumbling billows of sand never at rest. None have crossed this sea; it lacks water altogether, yet fish are cast up upon the beach of various kinds, very tasty, and the like are nowhere else to be seen. Three days' journey from this sea are mountains from which rolls down a stony, waterless river, which opens into the sandy sea. As soon as the stream reaches the sea, its stones vanish in it and are never seen again. As long as the river is in motion, it cannot be crossed; only four days a week is it possible to traverse it. Between the sandy sea and the said mountains, in a certain plain is a fountain of singular virtue, which purges Christians and would-be Christians from all transgressions. The water stands four inches high in a hollow stone shaped like a mussel-shell. Two saintly old men watch by it, and ask the comers whether they are Christians, or are about to become Christians, then whether they desire healing with all their hearts. If they have answered well, they are bidden to lay aside their clothes, and to step into the mussel. If what they said be true, then the water begins to rise and gush over their heads; thrice does the water thus lift itself, and every one who has entered the mussel leaves it cured.

Near the wilderness trickles between barren mountains a subterranean rill, which can only by chance be reached, for only occasionally the earth gapes, and he who would descend must do it with precipitation, ere the earth closes again. All that is gathered under the ground there is gem and precious stone. The brook pours into another river, and the inhabitants of the neighborhood obtain thence abundance of precious stones. Yet they never venture to sell them without having first offered them to us for our private use: should we decline them, they are at liberty to dispose of them to strangers. Boys there are trained to remain three or four days under water, diving after the stones.

Beyond the stone river are the ten tribes of the Jews, which, though subject to their own kings, are, for all that, our slaves and tributary to our Majesty. In one of our lands, hight Zone, are worms called in our tongue Salamanders. These worms can only live in fire, and they build cocoons like silk-worms, which are unwound by the ladies of our palace, and spun into cloth and dresses, which are worn by our Exaltedness. These dresses in order to be cleaned and washed are cast into flames.

The remainder is devoted to a glowing description of the wealth and power of the monarch, and was probably the fabrication of some Eastern sect, possibly the Nestorians. It is needless to say that modern explorations have proved the utter falsity of the belief.

IV. The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. In his *Golden Legend,* a collection of lives of the saints, Jacobus de Voraigne, who was a Dominican and toward the close of the thirteenth century archbishop of Genoa, tells the story of the Seven Sleepers thus:

The seven sleepers were natives of Ephesus. The Emperor Decius, who persecuted the Christians, having come to Ephesus, ordered the erection of temples in the city, that all might come and sacrifice before him, and he commanded that the Christians should be sought out and given their choice, either to worship the idols, or to die. So great was the consternation in the city, that the friend denounced his friend, the father his son, and the son his father.

Now there were in Ephesus seven Christians, Maximian, Malchus, Marcian, Dionysius, John, Serapion, and Constantine by name. These refused to sacrifice to the idols, and remained in their houses praying and fasting. They were accused before Decius, and they confessed

themselves to be Christians. However, the Emperor gave them a little time to consider what line they would adopt. They took advantage of this reprieve to dispense their goods among the poor, and then they retired, all seven, to Mount Celion, where they determined to conceal themselves.

One of their number, Malchus, in the disguise of a physician, went to the town to obtain victuals. Decius, who had been absent from Ephesus for a little while, returned, and gave orders for the seven to be sought. Malchus, having escaped from the town, fled, full of fear, to his comrades, and told them of the Emperor's fury. They were much alarmed; and Malchus handed them the loaves he had bought, bidding them eat, that, fortified by the food, they might have courage in the time of trial. They ate, and then, as they sat weeping and speaking to one another, by the will of God they fell asleep.

The Pagans sought everywhere, but could not find them, and Decius was greatly irritated at their escape. He had their parents brought before him, and threatened them with death if they did not reveal the place of concealment; but they could only answer tha' the seven young men had distributed their goods to the poor, and that they were quite ignorant as to their whereabouts.

Decius, thinking it possible that they might be hiding in a cavern, blocked up the mouth with stones, that they might perish of hunger.

Three hundred and sixty years passed, and in the thirtieth year of the reign of Theodosius, there broke forth a heresy denying the resurrection of the dead. . . .

Now, it happened that an Ephesian was building a stable on the side of Mount Celion, and finding a pile of stones handy, he took them for his edifice, and thus opened the mouth of the cave. Then the seven sleepers awoke, and it was to them as if they had slept but a single night. They began to ask Malchus what decision Decius had given concerning them.

"He is going to hunt us down, so as to force us to sacrifice to the idols," was his reply. "God knows," re-

plied Maximian, "we shall never do that." Then exhorting his companions, he urged Malchus to go back to the town to buy some more bread, and at the same time to obtain fresh information. Malchus took five coins and left the cavern. On seeing the stones, he was filled with astonishment; however, he went on towards the city; but what was his bewilderment, on approaching the gate, to see over it a cross! He went to another gate, and there he beheld the same sacred sign; and so he observed it over each gate of the city. He believed that he was suffering from the effects of a dream. Then he entered Ephesus, rubbing his eyes, and he walked to a baker's shop. He heard people using our Lord's name, and he was the more perplexed. "Yesterday, no one dared pronounce the name of Jesus, and now it is on every one's lips. Wonderful! I can hardly believe myself to be in Ephesus." He asked a passer-by the name of the city, and on being told it was Ephesus, he was thunderstruck. Now he entered a baker's shop, and laid down his money. The baker, examining the coin, inquired whether he had found a treasure, and began to whisper to some others in the shop. The youth, thinking that he was discovered, and that they were about to conduct him to the Emperor, implored them to let him alone, offering to leave loaves and money if he might only be suffered to escape. But the shopmen, seizing him, said: "Whoever you are, you have found a treasure; show us where it is, that we may share it with you, and then we will hide you." Malchus was too frightened to answer. So they put a rope round his neck, and drew him through the streets into the market-place. The news soon spread that the young man had discovered a great treasure, and there was presently a vast crowd about him. He stoutly protested his innocence. No one recognized him, and his eyes ranging over the faces which surrounded him, could not see one which he had known, or which was in the slightest degree familiar to him.

S. Martin, the bishop, and Antipater, the governor, having heard of the excitement, ordered the young man

to be brought before them, along with the bakers. The bishop and the governor asked him where he had found the treasure, and he replied that he had found none, but that the few coins were from his own purse. He was next asked whence he came. He replied that he was a native of Ephesus, "if this be Ephesus."

"Send for your relations—your parents, if they live here," ordered the governor.

"They live here certainly," replied the youth; and he mentioned their names. No such names were known in the town. Then the governor exclaimed: "How dare you say that this money belonged to your parents when it dates back three hundred and seventy-seven years, and is as old as the beginning of the reign of Decius, and it is utterly unlike our modern coinage? Do you think to impose on the old men and sages of Ephesus? Believe me, I shall make you suffer the severities of the law unless you show where you made the discovery."

"I implore you," cried Malchus, "in the name of God, answer me a few questions, and then I will answer yours! Where is the Emperor Decius gone to?"

The bishop answered, "My son, there is no emperor of that name; he who was thus called died long ago."

Malchus replied, "All I hear perplexes me more and more. Follow me, and I will show you my comrades who fled with me into a cave of Mount Celion, only yesterday, to escape the cruelty of Decius. I will lead you to them."

The bishop turned to the governor. "The hand of God is here," he said. Then they followed, and a great crowd after them. And Malchus entered first into the cavern to his companions, and the bishop after him. . . . And there they saw the martyrs seated in the cave, with their faces fresh and blooming as roses; so all fell down and glorified God. The bishop and the governor sent notice to Theodosius, and he hurried to Ephesus. All the inhabitants met him and conducted him to the cavern. As soon as the saints beheld the Emperor, their faces shone like the sun, and the Emperor gave thanks unto God, and embraced them, and said, "I see you, as though

I saw the Savior restoring Lazarus.'' Maximian replied, ''Believe us! for the faith's sake, God has resuscitated us before the great resurrection day, in order that you may believe firmly in the resurrection of the dead. For as the child is in its mother's womb living and not suffering, so have we lived without suffering, fast asleep.'' And having thus spoken, they bowed their heads, and their souls returned to their Maker. The Emperor, rising, bent over them and embraced them weeping. He gave orders for golden reliquaries to be made, but that night they appeared to him in a dream, and said that hitherto they had slept in the earth, and that in the earth they desired to sleep on till God should raise them again.

Such is the beautiful story of one of the most picturesque legends of the Middle Ages, one which finds its way to the literature and art of almost every European country. Mahomet in using the story gives the sleeper a dog Kratim, who is to be admitted into Paradise with Jonah's whale, Solomon's ant, Ishmael's ram, Abraham's calf, the Queen of Sheba's ass, the camel of the prophet Salech, the ox of Moses, the cuckoo of Belkis and the ass of Mahomet, they being the only other animals that will enjoy the high privilege.

From the time of Epimenides, the sage of Greece, to Rip Van Winkle, whom Irving made immortal in story as Jefferson did on the stage, there have been legends of sleepers in every country of the world, all of them having a general similarity, but differing in details. The old heathen myth was a beautiful story that may have grown out of the seven months of wintry sleep which each year the earth endures.

V. Schamir. As the tale runs, Solomon, wondering how he might build his temple without the use of iron, is told of the *schamir,* a worm the size of a barley corn, but so strong that the hardest iron could not resist it, and is recommended to ask Asmodeus, king of the devils, how to obtain it. Benaiah is sent to secure Asmodeus and does it by draining the cistern where the chief devil drank daily, filling it with wine, and when the devil fell in a drunken stupor, binding him with chains. Brought before Solomon, Asmodeus confessed that schamir belonged to the Prince of the Sea, who entrusted the precious worm to no one but the moor-hen, who had been sworn to secrecy and devotion and who was known as the mountain breaker, because she used schamir to split the rocks, in order that she might plant the seeds which grow and cover the naked rocks. The only way to get schamir from the moor-hen is to find her nest and cover it with glass, so that she can not get at her young: then would she seek the worm and bring it to break the glass. Acting on this suggestion, Solomon procured schamir and built his temple, but the moor-hen was so distressed at her treachery that she killed herself.

According to another legend the raven, by a similar stratagem, is caused by Solomon to bring from a desert in the uttermost East the stone called *samur,* with which she could break glass and burrow noiselessly after minerals and metals. According to a third legend, the

bird is an eagle, and the schamir is the Stone of Wisdom. After the building of the temple, schamir vanished.

The Greeks had a similar story, and in the English *Gesta Romanorum* appears the tale of the noble Emperor Diocletian, who loved virtue above all things and therefore wished to know which bird was most devoted to its young. One day, while he was wandering in the forest, he found an ostrich hovering over its young in their nest, and, taking the nest and its contents, placed all in a glass vessel in his palace. The ostrich followed; unable to reach her young, she disappeared for three days and then returned bringing a worm called *thumare,* which, dropped upon the glass, shivered it, and the little birds flew away with their mother.

Numberless other versions of the story appeared. Gervaise of Tilbury writes:

> And in our time, in the reign of Pope Alexander III, when I was a boy, there was found at Rome, a vial full of milky liquid, which, when sprinkled on any kinds of stone, made them receive such sculpture as the hand of the graver was wont to execute. It was a vial discovered in a most ancient palace, the matter and art of which was a subject of wonder to the Roman people.

Albertus Magnus says:

> If you wish to burst chains, go into the wood and look for a woodpecker's nest, where there are young; climb the tree, and choke the mouth of the nest with anything you like. As soon as she sees you do this, she flies off for a plant, which she lays on the stoppage; this bursts, and the plant falls to the ground under the tree, where you must have a cloth spread for receiving it.

In other forms of the legend, schamir has the power of restoring sight to the blind and life to the dead, as was the belief in Normandy, in Iceland, and elsewhere. Sometimes the medium is a plant, sometimes a pebble.

Fougue, in *Sir Elidoc,* relates through the little boy Amyot, who is watching by the body of a dead lady, laid out in a church, the following variation:

Suddenly I heard a loud cry from the child. I looked up, a little creature glided by me; the shepherd's staff of the boy flew after it; the creature lay dead, stretched on the ground by the blow. It was a weasel. . . . Presently there came a second weasel, as if to seek his comrade, and when he found him dead, a mournful scene began; he touched him as if to say, "Wake up, wake up, let us play together!" And when the other little animal lay dead and motionless, the living one sprang back from him in terror, and then repeated the attempt again and again, many times. Its bright little eyes shone sadly, as if they were full of tears. The sorrowful creature seemed as though it suddenly bethought itself of something. It erected its ears, it looked round with its bright eyes, and then swiftly darted away. And before Amyot and I could ask each other of the strange sight, the little animal returned again, bearing in its mouth a root, a root to which grew a red flower; I had never before seen such a flower blowing; I made a sign to Amyot, and we both remained motionless. The weasel came up quickly, and laid the root and the flower gently on its companion's mouth; the creature, but now stiff in death, stretched itself, and suddenly sprang up, with the root still in its mouth. I called to Amyot, "The root! take it, take it, but do not kill!" Again he flung his staff, but so dexterously that he killed neither of the weasels, nor even hurt them. The root of life and the red blossoms lay on the ground before me, and in my power.

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

Germany has many tales of the *luckflower,* which run something like this: A man picks a beautiful flower, usually blue, and puts it in his breast or his hat, and as he walks along a mountain, the rocks open before him; he enters, and meets a beautiful lady, who urges him to take all he wishes of the glittering gold nuggets that everywhere surround him. As he is leaving, the lady cries, "Forget not the best," and he, thinking she means to take more gold, loads himself still more heavily and goes out forgetting the blue flower which has fallen from his coat. As he goes out, the rocks forever shut so close behind him that they cut off his heel. In some versions it is the pale little flower itself which feebly wails, "Forget-me-not!"

VI. The Piper of Hamelin. Most of us are familiar with Browning's poem on the Pïed Piper, but few of us realize how firmly the tale was believed in the Middle Ages or how many similar legends are connected with other places. That Hamelin in Prussia was infested by rats, that a piper cleared the city of them by the power of his music, that when the city refused to pay him, he piped away one hundred thirty children and disappeared with them into the side of Koppenberg Mountain, seemed veritable facts to the credulous of later generations. Only one blind child and one dumb child remained behind, or, as other accounts have it, only one little lame boy was left, and his whole life was saddened by the catastrophe that robbed him of his playmates:

It's dull in our town since my playmates left;
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the piper also promised me;
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town, and just at hand,
Where waters gush'd, and fruit-trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And every thing was strange and new;
And sparrows were brighter than peacocks here
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagle's wings;
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopp'd, and I stood still,
And found myself outside the hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more.

On the street through which the children passed, no drum was allowed to play; on the Rathhaus, on a gate of the city and on two crosses on the Koppenberg were sculptured inscriptions relating to the calamity.

Similar tales are told of other places: A violinist coaxed the children away from Brandenburg, and they were shut up in the Marienberg; Lorch, devastated by ants, was freed by a piping hermit who led the insects into the river, but when the money for his chapel was refused, he led the pigs into the lake and disappeared; the next year it was a plague of crickets, relieved by a piping charcoal burner, who in revenge for non-payment led the sheep

into the lake; the third year it was a plague of rats, and the little old man of the mountain, who was not paid for taking them away, enticed the children into the Tannenberg.

From the wilds of Abyssinia, from classic Greece, from frozen Iceland, from Rome, from France and from the British Isles come other legends, all having in them a magic song that has power to move everything. It is the music played by Orpheus on his lyre, it is the song of the Sirens, but ever in a new dress, as strange people learned the legend. Still one of the names of Apollo is Smintheus, given because he delivered Phrygia from a plague of rats.

VII. Bishop Hatto. On a rock in the middle of the Rhine are the ruins of a quaint old tower whose weird legend is known to every traveler on that historic river. In reality the "Mouse Tower" was erected as a post for the collection of tolls from vessels passing up and down the river, and historically the legend has no foundation. Hatto II was bishop of Mainz toward the close of the tenth century. The legend says that when Germany suffered from famine, and the bishop grew tired of their cries for bread, he invited all who were hungry to come to his great barn, and after they had assembled he closed and locked the doors, set fire to the barn, and burnt them all:

"I' faith, 'tis an excellent bonfire!" quoth he,
"And the country is greatly obliged to me
For ridding it, in these times forlorn,
Of rats that only consume the corn."

Then came the hungry rats, troops and troops of them. They ate the bishop's picture from its frame on the wall; they devoured all the corn in his granaries; they entered his palace and drove him to his tower in the river; there they overpowered him and literally "picked his bones."

The Bishop Hatto of history was by no means a hard-hearted and wicked prelate, and just why legend should so have maligned him no one knows. But the story is told of other persons and places, until it would seem that the rats and mice of all countries have a particular taste for Church dignitaries and oppressive landlords.

Quaint old William of Malmsbury, the English monk who wrote in the early part of the twelfth century, tells this story:

I have heard a person of the utmost veracity relate, that one of the adversaries of Henry IV (of Germany), a weak and factious man, while reclining at a banquet, was on a sudden so completely surrounded by mice as to be unable to escape. So great was the number of these little animals, that there could scarcely be imagined more in a whole province. It was in vain that they were attacked with clubs and fragments of the benches which were at hand; and though they were for a long time assailed by all, yet they wreaked their deputed curse on no one else; pursuing him only with their teeth, and with a kind of dreadful squeaking. And although he was carried out to sea about a javelin's cast by the servants, yet he could not by these means escape their violence; for immediately so great a multitude of mice took to the water, that you would have sworn the sea was strewed with chaff. But when they began to gnaw the planks

of the ship, and the water rushing through the chinks, threatened inevitable shipwreck, the servants turned the vessel to the shore. The animals, then also swimming close to the ship, landed first. Thus the wretch, set on shore, and soon after entirely gnawed in pieces, satiated the dreadful hunger of the mice.

I deem this the less wonderful, because it is well known that in Asia, if a leopard bite any person, a party of mice approach directly. . . . . But if, by the care of servants driving them off, the destruction can be avoided during nine days, then medical assistance, if called in, may be of service. My informant had seen a person wounded after this manner, who, despairing of safety on shore, proceeded to sea, and lay at anchor; when, immediately, more than a thousand mice swam out, wonderful to relate, in the rinds of pomegranates, the insides of which they had eaten; but they were drowned through the loud shouting of the sailors.

Most of these tales come from northern nations, and show how prevalent among them was the idea of men being devoured by ravenous vermin. A further notion was that the soul took the form of a mouse or some small animal when it left the body, in which case the action of vermin devouring human beings may be connected with the idea of the revenge of murdered men.

VIII. MELUSINA. The charming story of Undine, the corresponding Danish tale by Hans Christian Andersen, with many another of similar nature, are variations of the same stock myth of the union of a mortal with an immortal, of a human being with a fairy or a spirit. In most of them the union is conditioned upon some deprivation: Psyche must

never look upon Cupid; Raymond must not look upon Melusina during her seclusion on Saturdays; Urvaci must never see Puravaras without his clothes. The marriage is usually for love only, but in some instances there is another purpose; thus, Melusina marries to escape from enchantment, Undine and the mermaid of the Ottawas marry to acquire souls. The breaking of the condition results in the loss of the loved one, who is sometimes recovered, but in most instances is gone forever.

In the case of Melusina, another element enters. She is a water fay whom Raymond met at a fountain after he had accidentally slain his guardian on a hunting trip. A large family is born to them, but the children all are abnormal or monstrous in some respect. The first son had a large mouth, pendulous ears, one red and one green eye; the second had a scarlet face; the third was fine and handsome, but had one eye higher than the other; the next had long claws on his fingers and was covered with hair; the sixth, Geoffry of the Tooth, was so called because of the boar's tusk that protruded from his jaws. When Raymond, at the instigation of his tale-bearing father and brothers, looks at Melusina in her Saturday seclusion, he finds her in the water of her bath with her lower limbs changed into the tail of a fish or serpent. Some time afterward Raymond heard that Geoffry of the Tooth had attacked and burned a monastery with its abbot and a hundred monks, and, losing all his composure over the

disaster, he forgot himself and in his horror at his son's deed called Melusina an "odious serpent, contaminator of my race," and she, after giving him charge of her infant children, remarks before leaving forever that "those who follow thee shall see me hover over this fair land of Lusignan, whenever a new lord is to come."

In 1574 the legend of Lusignan appears in the work of Brantome in the following narrative:

I heard, more than forty years ago, an old veteran say, that when the Emperor Charles V came to France, they brought him by Lusignan for the sake of the recreation of hunting the deer, which were then in great abundance in the fine old parks of France; that he was never tired of admiring and praising the beauty, the size, and the chef d'oeuvre of that house, built, which is more, by such a lady, of whom he made them tell him several fabulous tales, which are there quite common, even to the good old women who washed their linen at the fountains, whom Queen Catherine de Medicis, mother of the King, would also question and listen to. Some told her that they used sometimes to see her come to the fountain, to bathe in it, in the form of a most beautiful woman and in the dress of a widow. Others said that they used to see her, but very rarely, and that on Saturday evening (for in that state she did not let herself be seen), bathing, half her body being that of a very beautiful lady, the other half ending in a snake; others, that she used to appear a-top of the great tower in a very beautiful form, and as a snake. Some said, that when any great disaster was to come on the kingdom, or a change of reign, or a death, or misfortune among her relatives, who were the greatest people of France, and were kings, that three days before she was heard to cry, with a cry most shrill and terrible, three times.

This is held to be perfectly true. Several persons of that place, who have heard it, are positive of it, and hand it from father to son; and say that, even when the siege came on, many soldiers and men of honor, who were there, affirmed it. But it was when order was given to throw down and destroy her castles, that she uttered her loudest cries and wails. Since then she has not been heard. Some old wives, however, say she has appeared to them, but very rarely.

This, it will be seen, is the same tale as that of the Irish banshee, which is thus described:

We saw the figure of a tall, thin woman with uncovered head, and long hair that floated round her shoulders, attired in something which seemed either a loose white cloak or a sheet thrown hastily about her, uttering piercing cries.

The most remarkable instance (of the banshee) occurs in the MS. memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, so exemplary for her conjugal affection. Her husband, Sir Richard, and she chanced, during their abode in Ireland, to visit a friend, the head of a sept, who resided in an ancient baronial castle surrounded with a moat. At midnight she was awakened by a ghastly and supernatural scream, and looking out of bed, beheld in the moonlight a female face and part of the form hovering at the window. The face was that of a young and rather handsome woman, but pale, and the hair, which was reddish, loose and disheveled. The dress, which Lady Fanshawe's terror did not prevent her remarking accurately, was that of the ancient Irish. This apparition continued to exhibit itself for some time, and then vanished, with two shrieks similar to that which had first excited Lady Fanshawe's attention. In the morning, with infinite terror, she communicated to her host what she had witnessed, and found him prepared, not only to credit, but to account for the apparition:

"A near relation of my family," said he, "expired last night in this castle. We disguised our certain ex-

pectations of the event from you, lest it should throw a cloud over the cheerful reception which was your due. Now, before such an event happens in this family and castle, the female specter whom ye have seen always is visible: she is believed to be the spirit of a woman of inferior rank, whom one of my ancestors degraded himself by marrying, and whom afterwards, to expiate the dishonor done to his family, he caused to be drowned in the castle moat."

The mermaid, or half-fish-half-maid, notion in the story of Melusina is one of the most common in literature and needs no further comment, but we cannot resist quoting the following legend, once current among the North American Indians:

Once upon a time, in the season of opening buds, the people of our nation were much terrified at seeing a strange creature, much resembling a man, riding upon the waves. He had upon his head long green hair, much resembling the coarse weeds which the mighty storms scatter along the margin of the strand. Upon his face, which was shaped like that of a porpoise, he had a beard of the same color. But if our people were frightened at seeing a man who could live in the water like a fish or a duck, how much more were they frightened when they saw that from his breast down he was actually a fish, or rather two fishes, for each of his legs was a whole and distinct fish. And there he would sit for hours singing to the wondering ears of the Indians the beautiful things he saw in the depths of the ocean, always closing his strange stories with these words: "Follow me, and see what I will show you." For a great many suns, they dared not venture upon the water; but when they grew hungry, they at last put to sea, and following the man-fish, who kept close to the boat, reached the American coast.

IX. The Fortunate Isles. Probably as a result of objects cast by the waves upon the western shores of Europe there persisted from the earliest times legends of islands or a country far to the west, and naturally enough the imagination of the people played upon that unknown, inaccessible country. It was the ancient Atlantis, Meropis, Ogygia, the Fortunate Isles, the Garden of the Hesperides. When the Canary Islands came to be known to navigators and when at a still later date the wonders of America were disclosed to Europeans, it took many years to destroy the glamour of the supernatural with which they were surrounded.

Procopius, who wrote near the end of the fifth century, told the story which Scott in *Count Robert of Paris* renders thus:

> Beyond Gaul, and nearly opposite to it, but separated by an arm of the sea, lies a ghastly region, on which clouds and tempests for ever rest, and which is known to its continental neighbors as the abode to which departed spirits are sent after this life. On one side of the strait dwell a few fishermen, men possessed of a strange character, and enjoying singular privileges in consideration of thus being the living ferrymen who, performing the office of the heathen Charon, carry the spirits of the departed to the island which is their residence after death. At the dead of the night these fishermen are in rotation summoned to perform the duty by which they seem to hold permission to reside on this strange coast. A knock is heard at the door of his cottage, who holds the turn of this singular office, sounded by no mortal hand; a whispering, as of a decaying breeze, summons the ferryman to his duty. He hastens to his

bark on the sea-shore, and has no sooner launched it, than he perceives its hull sink sensibly in the water, so as to express the weight of the dead with whom it is filled. No form is seen; and though voices are heard, yet the accents are undistinguishable, as of one who speaks in his sleep.

. . . . . .

On the great island of Brittia the men of olden time built a great wall cutting off a great portion of the land. East of this wall, there was a good climate and abundant crops, but west of it, on the contrary, it was such that no man could live there an hour; it was the haunt of myriads of serpents and other reptiles, and if any one crossed the wall, he died at once, poisoned by the noxious exhalations.

The Blessed Isles, to which went the souls of the good, is according to an ancient poem a place of enchanting beauty, where youths and maidens dance hand in hand on the dewy grass among shady green trees laden with apples. A murmuring rill that flows from a spring in the middle of the island is life and joy to those who drink. Cows give milk so abundantly that they fill large ponds at the milking; white fruits and delicious foods are plenteous and free. In a floating palace of crystal the souls of the dead are received and may dwell in joy, as they fill the air with music.

So great was the splendor of the Blessed Isles in popular opinion that satirists jested about it and nicknamed it *Cocaigne,* or *Schlaraffenland.* There it is always day; quarreling and strife are unknown; no death is there; hail, rain, snow and blustering winds are never seen. Surrounded by cloisters built of gems and

spices, about which are birds singing merrily but ready roasted, flying into hungry mouths,—

There is a well fair abbaye
Of white monks and of grey;
There both bowers and halls,
All of pasties be the walls,
Of flesh, and fish, and rich meat,
The like fullest that men may eat.
Floweren cakes be the shingles all,
Of church, cloister, bower, and hall.
The pins be fat pudings,
Rich meat to princes and kings.

The Irish called their mysterious Western Land the Country of Youth, and looked at it much in the same light as the ancient Greeks. Crofton Croker says:

"Our land will reappear some day," say the old men to the young folk, as they lead them on a certain day of the year to a mountain-top, and point out over the sea to them; the fishers also on their coasts pretend that they see towns and villages at the bottom of the water. The descriptions which they give of this imaginary country are as emphatic and exaggerated as those of the promised land: milk flows in some of the rivulets, others gush with wine; undoubtedly there are also streams of whisky and porter.

Of the phantom Western Island which tradition said could sometimes be seen from the Canary Islands, Washington Irving writes:

Those who have read the history of the Canaries, may remember the wonders told of this enigmatical island. Occasionally it would be visible from their shores, stretching away in the clear bright west, to all appearance substantial like themselves, and still more beautiful. Expeditions would launch forth from the Canaries to

explore this land of promise. For a time its sun-gilt peaks and long shadowy promontories would remain distinctly visible; but in proportion as the voyagers approached, peak and promontory would gradually fade away, until nothing would remain but blue sky above and deep blue water below. Hence this mysterious isle was stigmatized by ancient cosmographers with the name of Aprositus, or the inaccessible.

Every Western nation, Iceland included, held a belief in these Fortunate Isles, and the reports differ but little, so that we may dismiss the subject with one more recital. Baring-Gould thus tells the Gaelic myth of what with them is known as the Noble Island:

In former days there lived in Skerr a Druid of renown. He sat with his face to the west on the shore, his eye following the declining sun, and he blamed the careless billows which tumbled between him and the distant Isle of Green. One day, as he sat musing on a rock, a storm arose on the sea; a cloud, under whose squally skirts the foaming waters tossed, rushed suddenly into the bay, and from its dark womb emerged a boat with white sails bent to the wind, and banks of gleaming oars on either side. But it was destitute of mariners, itself seeming to live and move. An unusual terror seized on the aged Druid; he heard a voice call, "Arise, and see the Green Isle of those who have passed away!" Then he entered the vessel. Immediately the wind shifted, the cloud enveloped him, and in the bosom of the vapor he sailed away. Seven days gleamed on him through the mist; on the eighth, the waves rolled violently, the vessel pitched, and darkness thickened around him, when suddenly he heard a cry, "The Isle! the Isle!" The clouds parted before him, the waves abated, the wind died away, and the vessel rushed into dazzling light. Before his eyes lay the Isle of the Departed basking in golden light. Its hills sloped green and tufted with beauteous trees

to the shore, the mountain-tops were enveloped in bright and transparent clouds, from which gushed limpid streams, which, wandering down the steep hill-sides with pleasant harp-like murmur, emptied themselves into the twinkling blue bays. The valleys were open and free to the ocean; trees loaded with leaves, which scarcely waved to the light breeze, were scattered on the green declivities and rising ground; all was calm and bright; the pure sun of autumn shone from his blue sky on the fields; he hastened not to the west for repose, nor was he seen to rise in the east, but hung as a golden lamp, ever illumining the Fortunate Isle.

There, in radiant halls, dwelt the spirits of the departed, ever blooming and beautiful, laughing and gay.

X. The Holy Grail. When Christ upon the cross was pierced by the spear, blood and water flowed from his side, and Joseph of Arimathea collected the blood of the Savior in the vessel from which he had eaten the Last Supper. The Jews, enraged at the act, cast Joseph into prison and left him to die of hunger, but for forty-two years he was fed and kept vigorous by the sacred vessel, until Titus released him from prison and received baptism at his hands. Such is the beginning of the story of the Holy Grail, which appears in the literature of every Western nation and is so involved in that of England and France that we shall repeatedly meet it. It is sufficient here to give the main outline. Joseph and his descendants kept the Grail with religious care, and eventually took it to Britain. Then it mysteriously disappeared and was sought faithfully by many knights, few of whom were worthy to gaze upon it, much less to secure it.

By another legend the Grail was kept in heaven until a race of heroes worthy to guard it should appear on earth. Perillus, an Asiatic, was the first prince of this line; he came to Gaul and was united to a Breton princess, from whom sprang Titurel, the one chosen by God to guard the Grail on earth and who organized its worship. The Grail could only be seen by the baptized, and not by them clearly unless they were untainted by sin. Besides supplying the guardians with food and drink to their taste and maintaining them in perpetual youth, the sight of it gave them a holy joy, a foretaste of heaven. In the mysterious circular temple of Montsalvatsch, built of precious stones, gold and aloe-wood, the holy vessel remained four hundred years, guarded by Titurel, who never seemed to be over forty years old. Every Good Friday a white dove appeared and laid a white oblation before the Grail, which then gave oracles in the form of miraculous characters that appeared upon the surface of the bowl and then faded away. Frimutelle, the son of Titurel, transgressed by loving a damsel, and lost his life in a joust given in honor of his mistress. Amfortas, next in line, for a grievous sin was wounded by a lance and could not be healed until one pure and young should come to Montsalvatsch, see the mysteries of the Grail, and ask their meaning. Years passed, the king lay wounded, the brotherhood of the Grail was dissipated, and the existence of temple and rites almost forgotten.

The various poems and tales relating to the Grail concern chiefly the search for it after this period. The following list gives the principal literary masterpieces that are connected with the story:

1. *Conte del Graal* (incomplete). Chretien de Troyes, end of the twelfth century. French.
2. *Parzival.* Wolfram von Eschenbach, beginning of the thirteenth century. German.
3. *Joseph d' Arimathie, Merlin, Perceval,* a trilogy. Robert de Boron, beginning of the thirteenth century. French.
4. *Quete de Saint Graal* (authorship unknown). French.
5. *Mabinogi of Peredur.* A Welch prose version from the fourteenth century.
6. *Sir Perceval of Galles.* An English poem of the middle of the fifteenth century.
7. *Morte d' Arthur.* Sir Thomas Malory. About 1470. English.
8. *Idyls of the King.* Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Nineteenth century. English.
9. *Parsifal.* Wilhelm Richard Wagner's last dramatic opera. Nineteenth century. German.
10. *The Vision of Sir Launfal.* James Russel Lowell, a poem, nineteenth century. American.

XI. The Mountain of Venus. The old heathen myth, localized in some form in many places over Europe, especially in Germany, is best told in the beautiful and sad story of Tannhauser, the famous minnesinger who sang

from his passionate heart of love and women. One day at dusk, as he rode by the cliff of Horselloch (Venusberg), he saw glimmering in the failing light the matchless form of a lovely woman beckoning to him. By her superhuman attractiveness he thought he recognized her as Venus, and was confirmed in his idea when she spoke to him, for then exquisite music floated through the air, a soft, rosy light illuminated her figure, and charming nymphs scattered roses about her feet. Burning with love, he followed the apparition, which led him up the mountain to a cave; as the form went beckoning him onward bright flowers bloomed about it, leaving a gleaming trail for him to follow into the cavern and down to the palace of Venus in the center of the mountain. Here he spent seven years in revelry and debauch, but at the end of that time his soul growing tired of the magnificence and dissipation yearned for the pure breezes of earth, the star-bespangled sky, the simple flowers of the mountain-side and the tinkle of the sheep-bells. In vain did he plead to Venus for release; but when he prayed to the Virgin-Mother, a rift appeared in the rocks and he found his way to the open air.

To his stricken conscience the scanty moss seemed better than the downy couches of revelry, and he flung himself upon the ground; he picked the delicate flowers, and tears rolled from his eyes and bathed his wasted hands. On his weary ears the chime of the village

church played invitingly, and he descended the mountain and in the little church made his confession. The good priest, appalled at his recital, dared not give him absolution, but passed him on to another, who sent him to a third, and so on until at last he was referred to the Pope himself. Shocked at the immensity of his sin, the stern Pope thrust the penitent away, exclaiming, "Guilt such as thine can never be remitted. Sooner shall this staff in my hand grow green and blossom, than that God should pardon thee." Lo, after three days the pastoral staff did indeed grow green and blossom, and the Pope sent messengers to hasten after Tannhauser. When they reached the mountain, they learned that a wayworn man with haggard brow and darkened eyes had just entered the cave in Venusberg. Since then Tannhauser has not been seen.

As we have learned, these folk stories, myths or legends have what may be called a root-form, from which there are divergences caused by differences of temperament and environment. The root of this story is the desire of the underground fairies or folk to unite with human beings; a man is enticed to the subterranean world and united with a woman of the strange race; desiring to revisit the earth, he escapes, but at the end returns to the lands below. The Scandinavians, the Scotch, the Swiss, the Germans, all have variations of this Venusberg myth. The most noted example is the dramatic *Tannhauser* of Wagner.

A similar myth is that of the statue and the ring, one quite popular version of which appears to this effect in the works of several medieval writers:

About 1050 a youth of noble birth was married in Rome, and while playing ball during the wedding festivities took off his ring and placed it on the finger of a statue of Venus. When he wished to take his ring again, he found the marble fingers clenched and the ring held fast. Thereafter he was haunted by Venus, who continually called to him, "Embrace me; I am Venus whom you have wedded; I will never restore your ring." Finally, by the assistance of a priest, the heathen divinity was compelled to give up the ring.

From the Faroe Islands comes this incident in the life of their hero Sigmund:

> They (Earl Hakon and Sigmund) went to the temple, and the Earl fell on the ground before her statue, and there he lay long. The statue was richly dressed, and had a heavy gold ring on the arm. And the Earl stood up and touched the ring, and tried to remove it, but could not; and it seemed to Sigmund as though she frowned. Then the Earl said, "She is not pleased with thee, Sigmund! and I do not know whether I shall be able to reconcile you; but that shall be the token of her favor, if she gives us the ring, which she has in her hand." Then the Earl took much silver, and laid it on the footstool before her; and again he flung himself prostrate before her, and Sigmund noticed that he wept profusely. And when he stood up he took the ring, and she let go of it. Then the Earl gave it to Sigmund, and said, "I give thee this ring to thy weal, never part with it." And Sigmund promised he would not.

The same myth, purified of the indecencies of some of the other medieval legends from the same root, represents a Christian knight who, playing at ball, is troubled by his ring; removing it, he places it on the finger of a statue of the Holy Virgin. When he tries to recover the ring, the clasped fingers prevent him; he recognizes the omen, renounces the world and enters a monastery.

XII. Conclusion. Interesting as it would be to continue this chapter, to dwell at length upon the dozens of other stories which may be found distributed through widely-separated parts of the world and which are so similar, wherever found, that it seems they must have sprung from a common origin, yet there are other matters that have heavier demands upon our attention. The comparative study of folklore and myths has been productive of a much clearer idea of the development of our culture and has proved fascinating to a host of students. Our purpose, however, has been fulfilled if in this chapter we have added to the store of literary allusions with which our readers are familiar.

MEDIEVAL FOUNTAIN AT BRESCIA

CHAPTER IV

HISTORY OF ITALY

SCOPE OF THE HISTORY. The early history of the Italian peninsula is the history of Rome, and the only literature was that of the Romans. Using for convenience the date of the extinction of the Roman Empire in the West as the time at which Roman literature ceased to be produced, we find that date, A. D. 476, to be our point of beginning this retrospect, though the first distinct literature in the Italian language was not produced until early in the thirteenth century. Necessarily we must be brief, but no adequate conception of the wonderful literature of Italy can be gained without some historical background.

II. THE OSTROGOTHS. When the young Romulus Augustulus was deposed by Odoacer, Zeno, the Byzantine Emperor, gave to the con-

queror the title *Patrician* and accorded him the rule in Italy, where he reigned until 493, when he was deposed in turn by Theodoric, the wise and just King of the Ostrogoths, who chose his ministers from among the Romans and respected the ancient manners, customs and even laws of the people.

However, the Ostrogoths still held to the Arian heresy and were consequently in bad odor with the orthodox Christians, and those in the south, at the death of Theodoric, welcomed an invasion from the East that had been ordered by Justinian; but in the north the Ostrogoths held sway until after a long and bloody war their last king fell in battle at Vesuvius, in 553.

III. The Lombards. The exarchs, or governors-general, who ruled at Ravenna in the name of the Roman Emperor were in trouble almost from the start, and in 568 were compelled to give up Northern Italy to the Longobards (Lombards), a Germanic tribe which came over the Julian Alps under Alboin, but lacked strength to conquer Rome, Ravenna, Venice, the islands of Sicily, Corsica, Sardinia and the important sea towns. The Lombards were Arians, and their rule, which lasted nearly two centuries, was exceedingly oppressive to the native Italians, although some of the kings were wise and considerate.

In 506 Gregory the Great converted the Lombards to orthodox Christianity and established Rome as the center of the old nation.

ETRUSCAN TOMBS OF THE FIFTH CENTURY
ORVIETO, ITALY

THE TOMB CHAMBER CONTAINED A SARCOPHAGUS, OFTEN WITH JEWELRY, FURNITURE, VASES, WEAPONS, ETC. WALLS WERE OFTEN PAINTED WITH DECORATED SCENES FROM ETRUSCAN LIFE OR OF GREEK MYTHOLOGY.

We cannot here enter into the disagreements which arose between the Church, the Lombards and the exarchs of the Eastern Empire, but must hasten on to the rule of King Luidprand, who endeavored to enforce his own regal authority upon bishops, nobles and exarchs alike.

IV. The Franks. Luidprand's ambitions were especially obnoxious to the Church, and the successors of Gregory called the Franks to their assistance. Originally the Franks were a confederation of Germanic tribes on the lower and middle Rhine, but under Clovis they had thrown off the Roman yoke in the latter part of the fifth century and, extending their boundaries, had formed the nucleus of the French kingdom. Under Clovis, too, they embraced Christianity, and having subdued the Visigoths, were in turn beaten by Theodoric, the Ostrogoth. The Merovingian dynasty lasted until about 751, when it gave place to the Carlovingian, to which dynasty Pepin belonged. The history of the Franks naturally belongs to French history, but this brief view is necessary to understand their connection with Italy.

In 756 Pepin defeated the Lombards, and having conquered several of their cities, gave them to the Pope and thus founded the temporal sovereignty of the Church. What Pepin had begun, his famous son Charlemagne completed; he deposed the last Lombard king in 774 and was crowned Emperor of the Romans,

in 800, by Pope Leo III. The southern cities remained under the rule of the Eastern Emperor. In 888 the Carlovingian line ended with the deposition of Charles the Fat.

V. Invasions and Anarchy. For three-quarters of a century following the end of the Frankish dynasty feudal nobles were the nominal rulers of Northern Italy, but it was a period of misrule, bloodshed and anarchy. The Greeks established themselves in Lombardy, and held sway in Southern Italy until 1043. Before the end of the ninth century the Saracens had overrun large parts of Southern Italy, and in the tenth century the plains of Lombardy were laid waste by invasions of Northmen and Magyars. Papal influence had declined, and Berengar II, the last of the so-called Italian emperors, having attempted to curb the aspiring nobles and ambitious bishops who made his rule so troubled, his enemies called in Otto the Great, the German King of Saxony, and in 962 Berengar was deposed, and Italy was then considered a fief of the German Empire.

VI. Independent Cities. For nearly eighty years after the deposition of Berengar one or another of the German rulers was acknowledged emperor or king, and "twelve times the German emperors," to use the words of Sismondi, "entered Italy at the head of their armies, which they always drew up on the plains of Roncaglia near Placentia; there they held the states of Lombardy, received homage

from their Italian feudatories, caused the rents due to be paid, and promulgated laws for the government of Italy. . . . After a stay of some months, the Emperor returned with his army into Germany; the nobles retired to their castles, the prelates and magistrates to their cities: neither of these last acknowledged a superior authority to their own, nor reckoned on any other force than what they could themselves employ to assert what they called their rights. Opposite interests could not fail to produce collision, and war was universal." Conditions at that time have been effectively summarized by the same writer:

Thus, nearly five centuries elapsed from the fall of the ancient Roman Empire to the passing over of the renewed empire to the Germans. For a long space of time Italy had been pillaged and oppressed, in turn, by barbarians of every denomination, who wantonly overran the country only to plunder, and believed themselves valiant because, though in small numbers, they spread terror over a vast extent, and imagined by bloodshed to give a dignity to their depredations. The country, thus exposed to so many outrages, did not remain such as the Romans had left it. The Goth, Lombard, Frank, and German warriors, who had successively invaded Italy, introduced several of the opinions and sentiments of the barbarian race, particularly the habit of independence and resistance to authority. They divided with their kings the country conquered by their valor. They caused to be ceded to them vast districts, the inhabitants of which they considered their property equally with the land. The Lombard monarchy comprehended thirty dukedoms, or marquisates; their number diminished under Charlemagne and his successors: but, at the same time, there rose under them a numerous class of counts

and *vavasors,* amongst whom every duke divided the province that had been ceded to him, under condition that they should swear fealty and homage, and follow him to the wars. The counts, in their turn, divided among the warriors attached to their colors the land apportioned to them. Thus was the feudal system, which made the possession of land the warrior's pay, and constituted an hereditary subordination, founded on interest and confirmed by oath, from the king down to the lowest soldier, established at the same time throughout Europe. The Lombards had carried into Italy the first germs of this system, which had been developed by the Franks, and invigorated by the civil wars of Charlemagne, and his successors: these wars rendered it necessary that every feudatory should fortify his dwelling to preserve his allegiance to his lord; and the country, which till then had been open, and without defense, became covered with castles, in which these feudal lords established their residence.

About the same time,—that is to say, in the ninth century,—cities began to rebuild their ancient walls; for the barbarian kings who had everywhere leveled these walls to the ground no longer opposed their reconstruction, the danger of being daily invaded by the rival princes who disputed the throne made them necessary; besides, at this epoch new swarms of barbarians from all parts infested Europe; the inhabitants of Scandinavia, under the name of Danes and Normans, ravaged England and France; the Hungarians devastated Germany and Upper Italy; the Saracens, masters of Africa, infested the southern coasts of Italy and the isles: conquest was not the purpose of any of these invaders; plunder and massacre were their only objects. Permission to guard themselves against continual outrages could not be withheld from the inhabitants of towns. Several thousand citizens had often been obliged to pay ransom to little more than a hundred robbers: but, from the time they were permitted by their emperors to rebuild their walls, to purchase or manufacture arms, they felt

themselves in a state to make themselves respected. Their long suffering had hardened them, had accustomed them to privations and danger, and had taught them it was better to defend their lives than yield them up to every contemptible aggressor; at the same time, the population of cities, no longer living in idleness at the expense of the provinces of the empire, addicted themselves to industry for their own profit: they had, accordingly, some wealth to defend. The ancient curiae and municipalities had been retained in all the towns of Italy by their barbarian masters, in order to distribute more equally the burdens imposed by the conquerors, and reach individuals more surely. The magistrates were the chiefs of a people who demanded only bread, arms, and walls.

From the time when towns were secured by walls, their power rapidly increased; the oppressed from all parts sought refuge in them from the oppressors: they carried with them their industry, and arms to protect the walls that defended them. Everywhere they were sure of a good reception; for every city felt it had strength only in proportion to the number of its citizens: each vied with its neighbor in efforts to augment the means of defense, and in the reception given to strangers. The smaller towns imitated the greater, the villages those in their turn; and each had a castle, or at least a tower, where the population, in case of a sudden attack, might retire with the most precious of their effects.

In the meantime the dukes, marquises, counts, and prelates, who looked on these cities as their property, on the inhabitants as men who belonged to them, and labored only for their use, soon perceived that these citizens were ill disposed to obey, and would not suffer themselves to be despoiled; since they had arms, and could defend themselves under the protection of their walls: residence in towns thus became disagreeable to the nobles, and they left them to establish themselves in their castles. They became sensible that to defend these castles they had need of men devoted to them; that, notwithstanding the advantage which their heavy armor gave them when

fighting on horseback, they were the minority; and they hastened to enfranchise the rural population, to encourage their growth, to give them arms, and to endeavor to gain their affections. The effect of this change of rule was rapid: the rural population in the tenth and eleventh centuries increased, doubled, quadrupled in exact proportion to the land which they had to cultivate.

. . . . . .

At the period when either kings or emperors had granted to towns the right of raising fortifications, that of assembling the citizens at the sound of a great bell, to concert together the means of their common defense, had been also conceded. This meeting of all the men of the state capable of bearing arms was called a *parliament*. It assembled in the great square, and elected annually two consuls, charged with the administration of justice at home, and the command of the army abroad. The militia of every city was divided into separate bodies, according to local partitions, each led by a *gonfaloniere*, or standard bearer. They fought on foot, and assembled round the *carroccio*, a heavy car drawn by oxen, and covered with the flags and armorial bearings of the city. A high pole rose in the middle of this car, bearing the colors and a Christ, which seemed to bless the army, with both arms extended. A priest said daily mass at an altar placed in the front of the car. The trumpeters of the community, seated on the back part, sounded the charge and the retreat. It was Heribert, archbishop of Milan, contemporary of Conrad the Salic, who invented this car in imitation of the ark of alliance, and caused it to be adopted at Milan. All the free cities of Italy followed the example: this sacred car, intrusted to the guardianship of the militia, gave them weight and confidence. The nobles who committed themselves in the civil wars, and were obliged to have recourse to the protection of towns, where they had been admitted into the first order of citizens, formed the only cavalry.

The parliament, which named the consuls, appointed also a secret council, called a *Consilio di Credenza*, to

assist the government, composed of a few members taken from each division; besides a grand council of the people, who prepared the decisions to be submitted to the parliament. The *Consilio di Credenza* was, at the same time, charged with the administration of the finances, consisting chiefly of entrance duties collected at the gates of the city, and voluntary contributions asked of the citizens in moments of danger. As industry had rapidly increased, and had preceded luxury,—as domestic life was sober, and the produce of labor considerable,—wealth had greatly augmented. The citizens allowed themselves no other use of their riches than that of defending or embellishing their country. It was from the year 900 to the year 1200 that the most prodigious works were undertaken and accomplished by the towns of Italy. They began by surrounding themselves with thick walls, ditches, towers, and counter guards at the gates; immense works, which a patriotism ready for every sacrifice could alone accomplish. The maritime towns at the same time constructed their ports, quays, canals, and custom-houses, which served also as vast magazines for commerce. Every city built public palaces for the *Signoria,* or municipal magistrates, and prisons; and constructed also temples, which to this day fill us with admiration by their grandeur and magnificence. These three regenerating centuries gave an impulse to architecture, which soon awakened the other fine arts.

VII. War of Investiture. If it were not for the frequent allusions to it in literature, we might avoid reference here to the long and bloody "war of investiture" which extended through the eleventh and well into the twelfth century, but as it is, a brief explanation will be helpful. Under the feudal system the granting of possession of land to tenants was a ceremonious affair, and was accomplished by the delivery of some material object, such as a

branch, a banner, or a clod of dirt, to the tenant by the feudal lord. This act was called the *investiture* of the tenant. When ecclesiastics came into offices with which lands were connected, the feudatory lords began to claim authority to *invest* the Church officials with their land and assume the rights of lay sovereigns over the Church. The Church ceremony of investiture of power in bishops, abbots and other dignitaries consisted of the delivery of a staff or crosier and the placing of the ring upon the finger, the one emblematic of the spiritual care of souls, the other of the espousal of his Church by the official. When lay suzerains assumed this right the Church rose in indignation, especially as it was the custom of emperors to take the crosier and the ring, to invest their wicked and aspiring favorites with Church positions, and even to sell them to the highest bidder. The warring factions were not reconciled until in 1122 in the "Concordat of Worms" the Emperor agreed to give up the form of investiture, to grant the clergy the right of election, and to restore certain possessions to the Church; on the other hand, the Pope agreed that elections should be held in the presence of the emperor and that the latter should confer investiture, but only by the touch of his scepter. This, however, was only one step toward correcting the evil of simony, or the sale of benefices.

VIII. Guelphs and Ghibellines. The derivation of these words is a matter of dispute,

some claiming them to be Italianized forms of the German words *Welf* and *Waiblingen,* another that they are derived from Guelph and Gibel, two rival brothers of Pistoia. According to the first story, in a fight between the German King, Conrad III, and Welf, Count of Bavaria, the soldiers of the latter raised the cry of *"Hie Welf,"* to which the King's troops replied, *"Hie Waiblingen,"* in allusion to one of Conrad's castles. The rivalry between the houses of Welf and Hohenstaufen had existed for years in Germany, but it did not break out in Italy until early in the twelfth century, but then it was on a larger scale and in a fiercer form than ever; in fact, the history of Italy through a large part of the Middle Ages is nothing less than the struggle between Guelph and Ghibelline, as the two great factions soon came to be known.

To understand this we must go back a little. The house of Este is one of the most ancient and princely families of Italy, the progenitors through the German branch of the modern houses of Brunswick and Hanover. In Italy Azzo II was the first leader of importance, and to him the Emperor Henry III granted Este and the duchy of Milan and other Italian fiefs, whereupon he assumed the name Este. His son Welf founded the German branch of the house to which we have alluded above; his brother Fulco founded the Italian branch, which furnished the chief leaders to the Guelphs in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and their

history is interwoven with the destinies of other leading families and the republics of Northern Italy. Their chief seats were at Ferrara, Modena, Ancona and Reggio. Some were distinguished soldiers and statesmen, and others were among the most famous patrons of literature that Italy produced. We shall meet Azzo VII, Alfonso I, his second wife, the notorious Lucrezia Borgia, Ercole (Hercules II), and others again. The male line became extinct in 1803. To return to the Guelphs and Ghibellines:

At the opening of the thirteenth century the quarrel was intensified in Italy by the fight for the German Imperial thrones between Philip of Swabia and Otto of Brunswick, who afterwards became the Emperor Otto IV. Frederick II, the heir of Philip, was compelled to throw his fortunes with the Ghibellines, while his enemies, the Popes, ranged themselves on the side of the Guelphs, who thereafter became the Papal party and that of the minor principalities and free cities. It is difficult to follow the warring factions or to form a clear notion of the situation. To the Church and the Empire the struggle represents the war of Church and State; to the Italian municipalities it is an effort to preserve a balance of power between the two great centers of authority—Empire and Pope—whereby each commune can remain free; to the period of liberty it is the war against absolutism, whether secular or ecclesiastical.

The cities of Northern Italy were divided; Florence, Bologna, Milan, and others usually acted as Guelphs, while Pisa, Verona and Arezzo were Ghibelline. In like manner the great Italian families took sides, but sometimes varied their allegiance from generation to generation. In general, the nobles of the more northern provinces were inclined to the Ghibellines, while those of the central and southern provinces favored the Guelphs. After the downfall of the German emperors, the contest ceased to be a war of great parties and degenerated into bloody rivalries between small factions. As early as 1271 Gregory X reproached the Italians for ignorantly fighting for mere names, and in 1334 Benedict XII proscribed the use of those stirring battle cries. Though Guelph and Ghibelline continue as names in the history of Italy until the sixteenth century, they had lost their power and early significance and ceased to be of more than literary interest.

IX. A Characteristic Incident. The terrible suicidal conflicts between Guelphs and Ghibellines may be illustrated by an incident which happened in 1215, and which might be duplicated in bloodiness in a hundred instances where the provocation was even less:

One of the objects of a league of cities in Northern Italy was to preserve the peace between the factions and hitherto the magistrates succeeded in maintaining peace, and one of the objects of the league was to preserve it; but, in 1215, a Guelph noble of the upper Vale of Arno,

named Buondelmonte, who had been made citizen of Florence, demanded in marriage a young person of the Ghibelline house of Amidei, and was accepted. While the nuptials were in preparation, a noble lady of the family Donati stopped Buondelmonte as he passed her door, and, bringing him into the room where her women were at work, raised the veil of her daughter, whose beauty was exquisite. "Here," said she, "is the wife I had reserved for thee. Like thee, she is Guelph; whilst thou takest one from the enemies of thy Church and race." Buondelmonte, dazzled and enamored, instantly accepted the proffered hand. The Amidei looked upon his inconstancy as a deep affront. All the noble Ghibelline families of Florence, about twenty-four in number, met, and agreed that he should atone with his life for the offense. Buondelmonte was attacked on the morning of Easter Sunday, just as he had passed the Ponte Vecchio, on horseback, and killed at the foot of the statue of Mars, which still stood there. Forty-two families of the Guelph party met and swore to avenge him; and blood did indeed atone for blood. Every day some new murder, some new battle, alarmed Florence during the space of thirty-three years. These two parties stood opposed to each other within the walls of the same city; and although often reconciled, every little accident renewed their animosity, and they again flew to arms to avenge ancient wrongs.

X. A Prosperous Period. In the latter part of the thirteenth and early part of the fourteenth centuries great Italian families began to rise. In Rome Orsini, Savelli and Colonna rose above all their local rivals and largely through their influence on the Popes extended their power far and wide. To support their grandeur they hired themselves and their retainers to such as would engage in war, and the result was that the two provinces nearest Rome be-

came the most thinly-populated and poorest-cultivated in Italy, for the peasants, lured by the life of adventure, followed their lords. Nevertheless, wealth poured into Rome from all sides, and an aspect of general prosperity pervaded Italy as a whole, the more conspicuous because elsewhere in Europe there was at this epoch little but poverty and barbarism.

The open country, except near Rome, was cultivated by an active and industrious race of peasants, enriched by their labor, and not fearing to display their wealth in their dress, their cattle, and their instruments of husbandry. The proprietors, inhabitants of towns, advanced them capital, shared the harvests, and alone paid the land-tax: they undertook the immense labor which has given so much fertility to the Italian soil,—that of making dikes to preserve the plains from the inundation of the rivers, and of deriving from those rivers innumerable canals of irrigation. The *naviglio grande* of Milan, which spreads the clear waters of the Ticino over the finest part of Lombardy, was begun in 1179, resumed in 1257, and terminated a few years afterwards. Men who meditated, and who applied to the arts the fruits of their study, practiced already that scientific agriculture of Lombardy and Tuscany which became a model to other nations; and at this day, after many centuries, the districts formerly free, and always cultivated with intelligence, are easily distinguished from those half-wild districts which had remained subject to the feudal lords.

The cities, surrounded with thick walls, terraced, and guarded by towers, were, for the most part, paved with broad flag-stones; while the inhabitants of Paris could not stir out of their houses without plunging into the mud. Stone bridges of an elegant and bold architecture were thrown over rivers; aqueducts carried pure water to the fountains. The palace of the *podestas* and *signorie* united strength with majesty. The most admirable of

those of Florence, the *Palazzo-Vecchio,* was built in 1298. The Loggia in the same city, the church of Santa Croce, that of Santa Maria del Fiore, with its dome, so admired by Michael Angelo, were begun by the architect Arnolfo, scholar of Nicolas di Pisa, between the years 1284 and 1300. The prodigies of this first-born of the fine arts multiplied in Italy: a pure taste, boldness, and grandeur struck the eye in all the public monuments, and finally reached even private dwellings; while the princes of France, England and Germany, in building their castles, seemed to think only of shelter and defense. Sculpture in marble and bronze soon followed the progress of architecture: in 1300, Andrea di Pisa, son of the architect Nicolas, cast the admirable bronze gates of the Baptistery at Florence; about the same time, Cimabue and Giotto revived the art of painting, Casella music, and Dante gave to Italy his divine poem, unequaled in succeeding generations. History was written honestly, with scrupulous research, and with a graceful simplicity, by Giovanni Villani, and his school; the study of morals and philosophy began; and Italy, ennobled by freedom, enlightened nations till then sunk in darkness.

The arts of necessity and of luxury had been cultivated with not less success than the fine arts: in every street, warehouses and shops displayed the wealth that Italy and Flanders only knew how to produce. It excited the astonishment and cupidity of the French or German adventurer, who came to find employment in Italy, and who had no other exchange to make than his blood against the rich stuffs and brilliant arms which he coveted. The Tuscan and Lombard merchants, however, trafficked in the barbarous regions of the west, to carry there the produce of their industry. Attracted by the franchises of the fairs of Champagne and of Lyons, they went thither, as well to barter their goods as to lend their capital at interest to the nobles, habitually loaded with debt; though at the risk of finding themselves suddenly arrested, their wealth confiscated, by order of the king of France, and their lives, too, sometimes endangered by

sanctioned robbers, under the pretext of repressing usury. Industry, the employment of a superabundant capital, the application of mechanism and science to the production of wealth, secured the Italians a sort of monopoly through Europe: they alone offered for sale what all the rich desired to buy; and, notwithstanding the various oppressions of the barbarian kings, notwithstanding the losses occasioned by their own often-repeated revolutions, their wealth was rapidly renewed. The wages of workmen, the interest of capital, and the profit of trade, rose simultaneously, while every one gained much and spent little; manners were still simple, luxury was unknown, and the future was not forestalled by accumulated debt.

XI. Genoa and Pisa. The growth and decay of Pisa illustrates what was happening on a different scale in the other important cities, and shows us the uncertainties of those stormy times:

The Republic of Pisa was one of the first to make known to the world the riches and power which a small state might acquire by the aid of commerce and liberty. Pisa had astonished the shores of the Mediterranean by the number of vessels and galleys that sailed under her flag, by the succor she had given the crusaders, by the fear she had inspired at Constantinople, and by the conquest of Sardinia and the Balearic Isles. Pisa was the first to introduce into Tuscany the arts that ennoble wealth: her dome, her baptistery, her leaning tower, and her Campo Santo, which the traveler's eye embraces at one glance, but does not weary of beholding, had been successively built from the year 1063 to the end of the twelfth century. These *chefs-d'oeuvre* had animated the genius of the Pisans: the great architects of the thirteenth century were, for the most part, pupils of Nicolas di Pisa. But the moment was come in which the ruin of this glorious Republic was at hand; a deep-rooted jealousy,

to be dated from the conquest of Sardinia, had frequently, during the last two centuries, armed against each other the republics of Genoa and Pisa: a new war between them broke out in 1282. It is difficult to comprehend how two simple cities could put to sea such prodigious fleets as those of Pisa and Genoa. In 1282, Ginicel Sismondi commanded thirty Pisan galleys, of which he lost the half in a tempest, on the 9th of September; the following year, Rosso Sismondi commanded sixty-four; in 1284, Guido Jacia commanded twenty-four, and was vanquished. The Pisans had recourse the same year to a Venetian admiral, Alberto Morosini, to whom they intrusted 103 galleys: but, whatever efforts they made, the Genoese constantly opposed a superior fleet. This year, however, all the male population of the two republics seemed assembled on their vessels: they met on the 6th of August, 1284, once more before the Isle of Meloria, rendered famous forty-three years before by the victory of the Pisans over the same enemies. Valor was still the same, but fortune had changed sides; and a terrible disaster effaced the memory of an ancient victory. While the two fleets, almost equal in number, were engaged, a reinforcement of thirty Genoese galleys, driven impetuously by the wind, struck the Pisan fleet in flank: seven of their vessels were instantly sunk, twenty-eight taken; 5,000 citizens perished in the battle, and 11,000 who were taken prisoners to Genoa preferred death in captivity rather than their republic should ransom them, by giving up Sardinia to the Genoese. This prodigious loss ruined the maritime power of Pisa; the same nautical knowledge, the same spirit of enterprise, were not transmitted to the next generation. All the fishermen of the coast quitted the Pisan galleys for those of Genoa. The vessels diminished in number, with the means of manning them; and Pisa could no longer pretend to be more than the third maritime power in Italy.

XII. The Bianchi and Neri. Typical of this epoch is the historic struggle between the

Bianchi and the Neri of Florence, which Sismondi relates as follows:

These very nobles, to whom was denied all participation in the government of the Republic, and almost the protection and equality of the law, were no sooner entered into their mountain castles, than they became sovereigns, and exercised despotic power over their vassals. The most cultivated and wooded part of the Apennines belonged to the Republic of Pistoia. It was a considerable district, bordering on the Lucchese, Modenese, Bolognese, and Florentine territory, and was emphatically designated by the name of the *Mountain*. It was covered with castles belonging either to the Cancellieri, or Panciatichi, the two families most powerful in arms and wealth in all Italy: the first was Guelph, the second Ghibelline; and as the party of the former then ruled in Tuscany, they had obtained the exile of the Panciatichi from Pistoia. The Cancellieri took advantage of this exile to increase their power by the purchase of land, by conquest, and by alliance; in their family alone they reckoned one hundred men at arms. This family was divided into two branches, of distant relationship and which were distinguished by the names of *Bianchi* and *Neri* (whites and blacks); a quarrel arose between them, and was maintained with all the perfidy and ferocity of which the Pistoiese nobility were then accused. Mutilations, assassinations, and desperate battles, from 1296 to 1300, followed each other with a frequency which at last alarmed all Tuscany. The Florentines, desirous of pacifying Pistoia, engaged that city to banish from its bosom all the Cancellieri, but at the same time opened their own gates to them, in the hope of being able to accomplish a reconciliation. This powerful family, allied to all the Guelph nobility of Italy, instead of forgetting their reciprocal injuries, drew their hosts into their quarrel: there were, it is true, already other causes of excitement in Florence. Corso Donati, a Guelph, possessed great influence over the ancient families who had

from the beginning directed that party. Vieri de Cerchi, a Guelph also, was the chief of those who, like himself, had recently risen to wealth and power; he reproached the former for not forgetting the ancient enmity between the Guelphs and Ghibellines; for still troubling the Republic with factions, when there was no longer any motive; and proposed to substitute equal laws, for superannuated proscriptions. The Cancellieri of the Neri party sided with Corso Donati, the ancient nobles, and the most violent of the Guelphs. Those of the Bianchi, on the contrary, took part with Vieri de Cerchi, the moderate Guelphs, and subsequently with the Ghibellines and the Panciatichi. In this last party enlisted Dante, the historian Dino Compagni, the father of Petrarch, and all those who began about this time at Florence to distinguish themselves in literature.

Boniface VIII endeavored to reconcile the two parties who, under the names of Bianchi and Neri, began to divide all Tuscany; but he was unable to make peace and soon espoused with zeal the party of the Neri, the aristocracy, and the most zealous Guelphs. He had called Charles de Valois, the brother of Philip le Bel, to Italy, to place him at the head of an expedition which he meditated against Sicily. He charged him to pacify Tuscany in his way; and gave him to understand that it would be easy, in states so rich, to repay himself for his trouble. The Republic of Florence dared not refuse the mediation of Charles: it was accustomed to regard the house of France as the protector of the Church and of the Guelph party. It, however, limited, in precise terms, the authority allowed him, before receiving him, and the 800 cavalry which he commanded, within the city. But the French princes, at this period, neither respected nor comprehended the liberty of the citizen: they were incapable of forming any idea of the reciprocal rights which they had to maintain. Charles, making no account of the engagements which he had taken, formed an intimate alliance with the Neri, whom he soon discovered to be the more aristocratic, and more virulent in

their enmities. Having agreed on his share of the booty, he gave, from the 5th to the 11th of November, 1301, a loose rein to their passion. He permitted them to pillage and burn the houses of their enemies; to kill those who were the most odious to them; to carry off the heiresses of rich families, and marry them to their sons; to cause sentences of exile and confiscation to be pronounced against all the most illustrious families of the Bianchi party by the podesta, a creature of Charles de Valois, whom he had brought there. The French cavalry, and the Guelphs of Romagna, whom Charles had also introduced into the city, assisted in all these outrages. It was then that Dante, and Petracco dell' Ancisa, the father of Petrarch, were exiled from their country, with many hundred others. Charles at last quitted Florence, on the 4th of April, 1302, carrying off immense wealth. His cavalry were loaded with gold and precious stuffs; but he carried with him also the curse of the Florentines, which seemed to follow him in his unsuccessful expedition against Sicily. Benedict XI, the successor of Boniface, vainly endeavored, during his short pontificate, to reconcile the Bianchi and Neri in the cities of Tuscany, and to recall the latter from exile. He died of poison, on the 4th of July, 1304. Some accuse Philip le Bel of the crime; he at least reaped all the benefit. This King succeeded by fraud in getting a Frenchman elected Pope, under the name of Clement V, whom, to keep him more subservient to his will, he always retained in France; drawing thither, also, the college of cardinals, who were recruited in that country, so that the successors of Clement might also be Frenchmen. It was the beginning of the long retirement, or, as the Italians call it, exile of the Popes, at Avignon, which terminated in 1377, and soon after began anew with the great Western schism. This exile was favorable to the independence of Rome, and of the other cities of the pontifical states; and at the same time rendered the Holy See almost indifferent to the Guelph party, which it had often seconded.

XIII. Venice. From the time of Attila, in 472, the marshes and slimy islands formed at the head of the Adriatic by the seven or eight rivers which there flowed into it had been the refuge of the rich nobles of neighboring cities whenever the Huns made their devastating inroads. At length a numerous population grew up there and supported themselves by fishing, manufacturing and inland commerce. Practically forgotten by the nations which warred for Northern Italy, they lived in peace except when quarrels arose among the little islands, each of which was a self-sufficient commune. In 697 a convention of all the citizens of the numerous islands was held, a confederacy was formed and a doge, or duke, elected a chief executive. In 890 in a war against Pepin, the son of Charlemagne, they collected their wealth and, choosing the island of Rialto, built their city and capital, Venice. Twenty-four years later they brought from Alexandria the body of St. Mark the Evangelist, made him their patron saint, and put his lion in their coat of arms.

Developing in a manner quite different from that of other Italian cities, Venice saw her nobility, the oldest in Europe, apparently docile to all laws, yet gradually usurping power until they finally became masters of the Republic. It was not till toward the end of the thirteenth century that the people discovered that they had no power, that the election of the doge was a farce, and that they were hard and

fast in the toils of an oligarchy. In 1297 came the "Closing of the Grand Council," whereby all active voice in the government was restricted to the older nobles of the city. In 1311, after the revolt of Tiepolo, a Council of Ten was created and put in control of the public safety of the State, where it came to play a very important rôle, especially in foreign policy.

The growth of Venice had been rapid, and before this time she had acquired considerable territories and was the undisputed mistress of the seas. As she increased in power she increased in magnificence, and her noblemen, having no extensive local estates, lavished their immense wealth upon spacious palaces which they furnished with pictures, statuary and other costly ornaments. The spoils of the East were brought to Venice and aided in giving life and animation to the minds of her scholars and artists.

In 1343 Andrea Dandolo was made Doge, a man who distinguished himself in every way and became the great authority on the history of his native land; in 1348 an earthquake, accompanied by huge tides, did great damage to the city; and almost immediately came the visitation of a horrible plague which killed two-fifths of the inhabitants and extinguished over fifty families of the nobility.

In 1354 Marin Faliero was elected Doge, at the age of seventy; he organized a conspiracy to overthrow the Republic and establish himself as sovereign. On the very eve of the execu-

tion of the plot, it was detected; Faliero was arrested, convicted and decapitated, in 1355. The portraits of the doges hang in the hall of the council, but over the space allotted to him hangs a black veil inscribed, "This is the place of Marino Faliero, decapitated for his crimes." Byron's drama of the same name is founded on the Doge's plot.

The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries saw a bitter commercial rivalry between Genoa and Venice which ended in a succession of bloody wars, pursued with varying success until 1380, when the Genoese navy was destroyed in the dramatic "War of Chioggia." Then Genoa, defeated and in decline, placed herself under the protection of France, but did not cease to be a center of important commercial and maritime adventure.

Immediately following came the time of greatest prosperity to Venice, when she sent her ships into every part of the world and bartered for the richest products of all lands. Then followed a war with Padua, at the end of which (1407) Venice found herself with a broad and thickly-populated province (Venetia) on the mainland of Italy, containing cities such as Padua and Verona and wide agricultural domains such as she had never known. This expansion proved disastrous to Venetian prosperity, for it aroused the jealousy and suspicion of all the nations and principalities of Europe, who conspired in the League of Cambrai (1509) to destroy the Re-

public. Venice managed by skillful diplomacy to preserve her territories, but ever after was content with a policy of isolation in continental affairs. From the middle of the sixteenth century till the Peace of Westphalia, Venice had the admiration of the world for her gallant fight against the advance of the Turks. Between the battle of Lepanto (1572) and Morosini's great victories in Greece (1681–1687) many glorious victories on land and sea came to Venetian arms, though the Republic issued from the conflict with her resources exhausted, her territories diminished and her commerce ruined. As a matter of fact, the death blow to Venetian prosperity had been struck when Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1497 and made his voyage from Lisbon to Calcutta, for thereafter the carrying trade of Europe passed largely into the hands of the Western states, a success that was greatly enhanced by the exploration of America.

In the eighteenth century the oligarchy which governed Venice had become corrupt and showed vigor only in the pursuit of pleasure. So, in 1796 it was not difficult for Napoleon to break the neutrality of Venice, destroy its government and cede the province to Austria. In 1806 Venice and its territory was annexed to the Kingdom of Italy; in 1814 it was again transferred to Austria; and in 1866 it became incorporated with the modern Kingdom of Italy.

XIV. The Fifteenth Century. If these somewhat hastily-drawn and inadequate pictures have conveyed the ideas they were intended to create, the reader can see how difficult it is to give in brief space a history of Italy, because for most of the time there was no Italy. Here were large numbers of people scattered from one end of the peninsula to the other, speaking the same language, but in dialects almost as different as separate tongues, fighting as bloodthirstily among themselves as against invaders, and yet finding time to gain a great material prosperity. From the middle of the fourteenth century to the end of the fifteenth there was no collective history. Each city was ruled by its own powerful family: the Della Scala at Verona; the Carrara at Padua; the Este at Ferrara; the Gonzaga at Mantua; the Della Torre, Visconti and Sforza families at Milan.

XV. Florence and the Medici. Before leaving the Middle Ages in Northern Italy we ought to consider the story of Florence and its great family, the Medici, and it cannot be done better than by reading the following account, abridged from Hallam's *Middle Ages:*

We must take up the story of that city from the revolution of 1382, which restored the ancient Guelf aristocracy, or party of the Albizi, to the ascendency of which a popular insurrection had stripped them. Fifty years elapsed during which this party retained the government in his own hands, with few attempts at disturbance. Their principal adversaries had been exiled, according to the invariable and perhaps nec-

essary custom of a Republic; the populace and inferior artisans were dispirited by their ill-success. But, while crushing with deliberate severity their avowed adversaries, the ruling party had left one family whose prudence gave no reasonable excuse for persecuting them, and whose popularity, as well as wealth, rendered the experiment hazardous.

The Medici were among the most considerable of the new or plebeian nobility. From the first years of the fourteenth century their name not very unfrequently occurs in the domestic and military annals of Florence. Throughout the long depression of the popular faction the house of Medici was always regarded as their consolation and their hope. That house was now represented by Giovanni, whose immense wealth, honorably acquired by commercial dealings, which had already rendered the name celebrated in Europe, was expended with liberality and magnificence. Of a mild temper, and averse to cabals, Giovanni de' Medici did not attempt to set up a party, and contented himself with repressing some fresh encroachments on the popular part of the constitution which the Albizi were disposed to make. They, in their turn, freely admitted him to that share in public councils to which he was entitled by his eminence and virtues; a proof that the spirit of their administration was not illiberally exclusive.

But, on the death of Giovanni, his son Cosmo de' Medici, inheriting his father's riches and estimation, with more talents and more ambition, thought it time to avail himself of the popularity belonging to his name. By extensive connections with the most eminent men in Italy, especially with Sforza, he came to be considered as the first citizen of Florence. The oligarchy were more than ever unpopular. Their administration since 1382 had indeed been in general eminently successful; the acquisition of Pisa and of other Tuscan cities had aggrandized the Republic, while from the port of Leghorn her ships had begun trade with Alexandria, and sometimes to contend with the Genoese. But an un-

prosperous war with Lucca diminished a reputation which was never sustained by public affection. Cosmo and his friends aggravated the errors of the government, which, having lost its wise and temperate leader, had fallen into rasher hands. Cosmo was arrested by command of a gonfalonier devoted to the Albizi, and condemned to banishment (A. D. 1433). But the oligarchy had done too much or too little. The city was full of his friends; the honors conferred upon him in his exile attested the sentiments of Italy. Next year he was recalled in triumph to Florence, and the Albizi were completely overthrown.

It is vain to expect that a victorious faction will scruple to retaliate upon its enemies a still greater measure of injustice than it experienced at their hands. The Albizi had in general respected the legal forms of their free Republic, which good citizens, and perhaps themselves, might hope one day to see more effective. The Medici made all their government conducive to hereditary monarchy. A multitude of noble citizens were driven from their country; some were even put to death. Cosmo died at an advanced age, in 1464. His son, Piero de' Medici, though not deficient either in virtues or abilities, seemed too infirm in health for the administration of public affairs. A strong opposition was raised to the family pretensions of the Medici. Like all Florentine factions, it trusted to violence; and the chance of arms was not in its favor. From this revolution in 1466, when some of the most considerable citizens were banished, we may date an acknowledged supremacy in the house of Medici, the chief of which nominated the regular magistrates, and drew to himself the whole conduct of the Republic.

The two sons of Piero, Lorenzo and Julian, especially the former, though young at their father's death, assumed, by the request of their friends, the reins of government (1469). It was impossible that, among a people who had so many recollections to attach to the name of liberty, among so many citizens whom their

ancient constitution invited to public trust, the control of a single family should excite no dissatisfaction. But, if the people's wish to resign their freedom gives a title to accept the government of a country, the Medici were no usurpers. That family never lost the affections of the populace. The cry of "Palle! Palle!" (their armorial distinction), would at any time rouse the Florentines to defend the chosen patrons of the Republic. If their substantial influence could before be questioned, the conspiracy of the Pazzi, wherein Julian perished, excited an enthusiasm for the surviving brother that never ceased during his life. Nor was this anything unnatural, or any severe reproach to Florence. All around, in Lombardy and Romagna, the lamp of liberty had long since been extinguished in blood. The freedom of Sienna and Genoa was dearly purchased by revolutionary proscriptions; that of Venice was only a name. The Republic which had preserved longest, and with greatest purity, that vestal fire, had at least no relative degradation to fear in surrendering herself to Lorenzo de' Medici.

I need not in this place expatiate upon what the name instantly suggests—the patronage of science and art, and the constellation of scholars and poets, of architects and painters, whose reflected beams cast their radiance around his head. His political reputation, though far less durable, was in his own age as conspicuous as that which he acquired in the history of letters. Equally active and sagacious, he held his way through the varying combinations of Italian policy, always with credit, and generally with success. As a patriot, indeed, we never can bestow upon Lorenzo de' Medici the meed of disinterested virtue. He completed that subversion of the Florentine Republic which his two immediate ancestors had so well prepared. The two councils, her regular legislature, he superseded by a permanent Senate of seventy persons; while the gonfalonier and priors, become a mockery and pageant to keep up the illusion of liberty, were taught that in exercising a legitimate authority without the sanction of their Prince—a name

now first heard at Florence—they incurred the risk of punishment for their audacity. Even the total dilapidation of his commercial wealth was repaired at the cost of the State; and the Republic disgracefully screened the bankruptcy of the Medici by her own. But, compared with the statesmen of his age, we can reproach Lorenzo with no heinous crime. He had many enemies; his descendants had many more; but no unequivocal charge of treachery or assassination has been substantiated against his memory. So much was Lorenzo esteemed by his contemporaries that his premature death has frequently been considered as the cause of those unhappy revolutions that speedily ensued, and which his foresight would, it is imagined, have been able to prevent; an opinion which, whether founded in probability or otherwise, attests the common sentiment about his character (1492).

Lorenzo died in the prime of life, too early to avert the disasters that threatened his city, or, if that were impossible, too early to witness her downfall.

XVI. Italy in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. The opening of the sixteenth century saw both France and Austria upon or within the boundaries of Italy and instituting claims and conquests that meant years of oppression for the disunited inhabitants of the peninsula. In 1499 France conquered Milan, but failed to subdue Naples and Sicily. Then followed a century of warfare in which it is difficult to trace the dominating forces. Pope Alexander VI and his more powerful successor extended their domains, organized leagues in which one party was played against another, and endeavored to reinstate their full temporal

sovereignty; France and Spain invaded Italy, with varying fortunes; in 1527 for seven months Rome was at the mercy of Spanish and German devastations. In fact, till the end of the eighteenth century Italy was the battle ground of nations in whose struggles she had little interest and whose victories and defeats merely added to her patient sufferings.

XVII. Napoleon. The Napoleonic invasion resulted in the defeat of Austrian troops and the loss of Italy to the Empire, but under the presidency of Napoleon Bonaparte she failed to realize the wild hopes of freedom with which her cities had greeted his conquests. In 1800 he crossed the Alps and by defeating the Austrians at Marengo confirmed his previous victories; after temporizing for a few years he was in 1805 crowned King of Italy at Milan. In the following year he named his brother Joseph as King of Naples, and gave Tuscany and other provinces to his sister Eliza in 1809. The overthrow of Napoleon caused the destruction of the Kingdom of Italy, and in 1815 the allies divided the country among themselves: Austria took the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom; Tuscany and other northern provinces went to Austrian princes, and Genoa was transferred to Victor Emmanuel I, King of Sardinia.

XVIII. Growth of National Consciousness. Apparently the condition of Italy was now worse than before. Social disorder prevailed, government was disorganized, and the

whole country was ripe for revolution. Genoa had been added to Sardinia under Victor Emmanuel, and the little Republic of San Marino and the principality of Monaco alone retained their independence.

But the French had impressed upon the sensitive Italian peoples many liberal principles, and men began to think in a way that made despotism extremely precarious. Constitutional government and national independence were talked everywhere, discontent increased, and a numerous secret police alone prevented open outbreaks. Under the relatively liberal House of Savoy, Sardinia was enjoying great prosperity, and the example increased the desire for similar government on the peninsula. Secret societies, like the Carbonari, sprang into existence and flourished vigorously. In 1820 uprisings in which the army took part occurred in Naples, and a year later in Piedmont.

The July Revolution in Paris produced an immediate effect in Italy: insurrections broke out in the Papal States, where the rule was extremely oppressive, and in 1831 a congress of delegates representing them adopted a constitution and established a Republic, only to be overthrown by Austrian arms; the Piedmontese were more successful in a way, and the death of the King brought a patriotic ruler in the person of Albert of Savoy.

XIX. Young Italy. Giuseppe Mazzini, an influential member of the Carbonari, presented to the King of Sardinia a petition urging that

monarch to assume the leadership of a movement for a free and united Italy. Unsuccessful in this plea and banished for his activities, Mazzini undertook the organization of a new league, called "Young Italy," whose purpose was to secure a union of Italy under a republican form of government. Dropping the methods of conspiracy and assassination which the Carbonari had practiced, Mazzini and his league worked openly through education, agitation and insurrection. A bold attempt to invade Savoy failed, and Mazzini went to England where, however, he labored incessantly to stimulate the nationalistic movement at home.

There the idea of unification grew apace, and the rulers, led by the Pope Pius IX, granted a large degree of freedom, as well as amnesty to past offenders. Instead of quieting the fever instigated by Young Italy, these measures only encouraged the revolutionary spirit, and one by one the states arose to ask for constitutional government.

Giuseppe Garibaldi was the son of a rude fisherman, poorly educated, and a common sailor on trading vessels. But he was an ardent disciple of Mazzini, and in 1834 was condemned to death as a traitor for participating in the schemes of his teacher. Escaping after a trying pursuit, he made his way to South America, where he organized his famous Italian legion and earned in the service of the rebels of Brazil the title of "Hero of Montevideo." In 1848 he returned to Italy and went to Rome to

support the new Republic which had been formed in the Papal States. The Austrians were driven out of Milan and Venice, but returned and defeated the Piedmontese armies so effectively that in 1849 the rule of Austria was paramount in all of Italy except Piedmont. Garibaldi fled to the United States, but after a time returned to Italy, where he lived quietly until his services were needed again.

XX. Cavour and Unification. Count Camillo Cavour was the most talented statesman and diplomat in Italy during the nineteenth century and upon him devolved the task of assisting Victor Emmanuel II of Sardinia to win for Italy the support and protection of the European powers against Austria, without which the successful unification of Italy could not be accomplished. The Italians were not disheartened by their failure in 1848, but had learned that they could succeed only under the leadership of some one State, so they gave ready acquiescence to Victor Emmanuel and his constitutional monarchy, which guaranteed a free press, freedom of thought, education and a liberal administration of laws.

Acting under the advice of Cavour, the brave troops of Victor Emmanuel took part in the Crimean War with England and France, and Cavour was a prominent delegate to the peace congress which met in Paris at the close of the war in 1856. Here he presented the cause of Italy, so eloquently pictured the sufferings of her people under Austrian rule that he enlisted

the sympathy of France, and in July, 1858, Emperor Napoleon III promised Cavour aid against Austria in return for Savoy and Nice.

All efforts to secure a peaceful settlement of affairs with Austria proved unsatisfactory, and she opened hostilities against Italy early in 1859. For a few months Napoleon aided Italy, but finally deserted his ally and made a separate treaty with Austria, by which Lombardy went to France, who was to transfer it to Sardinia; the dukes of Parma, Tuscany and Modina, who had been deposed, were to be reinstated only if their subjects wished it; and the states of Central Italy were to unite in a confederation under the Pope. The people of these latter states refused, and voted for a union with Sardinia, whereupon the Pope, supported by Austrian nobles, excommunicated the King and people of Sardinia.

About this time the patriot Garibaldi appeared upon the scene and, unable to secure the coöperation of Cavour and the Sardinian King, but doubtless with their sympathy, organized a company of a thousand volunteers and left Genoa for Palermo, where in May, 1860, the inhabitants had revolted against the ruler of the Two Sicilies. On the eleventh he landed in Sicily, declared himself dictator of Sicily "in the name of Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy," and by the twenty-fifth of July had subdued Messina, the last stronghold of the ruling sovereign. Crossing to Italy, he raised the standard of Victor Emmanuel at Naples.

Welcomed everywhere by the people, he was soon preparing to invade the Papal States, when Victor Emmanuel, who had anxiously been watching the courageous patriot all the time, determined to throw his forces against the Pope. Successful in actions against the Papal troops, he marched toward Naples, met and united his forces with those of Garibaldi, and soon the unification of Italy was almost an accomplished fact.

On February 18, 1861, the first Italian Parliament met at Turin, and a week later Victor Emmanuel was made King of Italy. Venice had not yet been added to the new kingdom, and to win that city and to make Rome the capital were the tasks to which Cavour set his talents of diplomacy and administration; but he died suddenly in June, with his task unfinished

XXI. Victor Emmanuel and Italy of Today. The House of Savoy, originally Maurienne, has occupied a stirring place in history, and its members will be met frequently by general readers. Savoy, itself on the borders of France and Italy, was known as "Gatekeeper of the Alps," and in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had extensive possessions in both Italy and France, but the zenith of its power was reached by Amadeo VIII, who was the first to be created Duke of Savoy by the Emperor, in 1416. The court of Charles Emanuel I was one of the most brilliant in the Italy of the seventeenth century. In the War of the

Spanish Succession the Savoy family had a claimant for the Spanish throne, but from this time on the fortunes of the House waned steadily, and at the time Victor Emmanuel II came to the throne of the kingdom of Sardinia he ruled over little more than the province of Piedmont and the island of Sardinia itself, which had come into the possession of his family in 1720.

The new King of Italy found much to contend with, and Garibaldi with his tactless impatience was a veritable thorn in the flesh. Twice he made abortive attempts to drive the Pope from Rome, defeated the first time by the Italian government itself at Aspromonte (1862) and again by the French at Mentana (1867). At the outbreak of the Franco-German War in 1870 the French were obliged to withdraw their troops, and Victor Emmanuel entered the Papal States. Rome voted to join the Kingdom of Italy, and was made the capital of the new State. Prior to this (in 1866) Victor Emmanuel had allied himself with Prussia in a war against Austria, and after Sadowa received Venetia as his reward, though the Trentino and the Italian cities of the Adriatic remained outside the Italian fold.

The constitution adopted by the new kingdom was that of Sardinia modified to suit the different economic conditions and the different peoples of various sections of the country. The executive power is vested in a hereditary king of the House of Savoy; the legislative power

in a Senate and Chamber of Deputies, the former consisting of princes and life members appointed by the king, with powers not unlike those of the American Congress; the administrative and judicial systems are founded on those of France.

One of the most delicate questions confronting Victor Emmanuel was the relation of the new kingdom to the Pope. Forced out of his temporal rule, the Pope retired to his palace, the Vatican, and the Italian Parliament passed the *Law of Guarantees,* which, while it delegated to the Pope no power in the temporal rule of the State, yet secured many rights to him. However, the Pope never accepted the Law of Guarantees nor otherwise recognized the Italian kingdom in any way.

Victor Emmanuel died in 1878, and was succeeded by his son Humbert I, who was killed by an anarchist in 1900. The chief event of Humbert's reign was the formation of the "Triple Alliance" of Italy, Germany and Austria.

Victor Emmanuel III, the son of Humbert I, was educated under the direction of his talented mother, Margherita of Savoy, and when he became King showed at once a wise and enlightened policy that placed him among the most capable and progressive of European rulers.

XXII. Naples. The history of the province of Naples, which included all Italy south of Rome, differed in many respects from that of

the cities of Northern Italy. After the downfall of the Western Empire, Naples was seized by Odoacer, but soon afterward it fell into the hands of the Goths, and in the following century it was occupied by the Lombards, who established in it several independent duchies. In time these were nearly all overthrown by invading Saracens, and then in the eleventh century the whole country was subdued by the Normans, who subsequently made a new kingdom of Naples and the island of Sicily.

The Normans were succeeded by the Hohenstaufen dynasty, a German family of imperial rank, but in 1266 at the battle of Benevento, Charles of Anjou, a French noble who had come to aid the Pope in his enmity to the House of Hohenstaufen, completely overwhelmed the reigning King Manfred. Konradin of Swabia, the next heir, then sixteen years old, was invited by the Neapolitans to come and repossess himself of the kingdom, but, although he was well supported, the young Prince was defeated, and with his relative, Frederick of Austria, captured and beheaded in the market-place of Naples. A few minutes before his execution Konradin threw his glove into the midst of the excited crowd and begged some one to carry it to his heir, Peter of Aragon, as a gage of vengeance. After many hair-breadth escapes, Chevalier de Waldburg succeeded in fulfilling his Prince's command. The sequel was seen in the Sicilian Vespers, than which there were few more awful incidents in the Middle Ages.

Charles of Anjou, brother of Louis IX of France, had seized and held Naples and Sicily and parceled out those kingdoms among his French followers. Their cruelties to the Sicilians were excessive and were finally carried to such an extent that the Palermites, on the 30th of March, 1282, rose against the French.

The immediate cause was the action of a French soldier, who treated rudely the person of a young bride as she was proceeding to the Church of Montreal with her betrothed husband, to receive the nuptial benediction. The indignation of her relations and friends was communicated with the rapidity of lightning to the whole population of Palermo. At that moment the bells of the churches were ringing for vespers: the people answered by the cry, "To arms—death to the French!" The French were attacked furiously on all sides. Those who attempted to defend themselves were soon overpowered; others, who endeavored to pass for Italians, were known by their pronunciation of two words, which they were made to repeat—*ceci* and *ciceri,* and were, on their mispronunciation, immediately put to death. In a few hours, more than 4000 weltered in their blood. Every town in Sicily followed the example of Palermo. Thus the Sicilian Vespers overthrew the tyranny of Charles of Anjou and of the Guelphs; separated the kingdom of Sicily from that of Naples; and transferred the crown of the former to the heir of the German reigning house.

MASSACRE OF THE CICILIAN VESPERS

THIS UPRISING LED TO IMPORTANT AND FAR-REACHING POLITICAL CHANGES BOTH IN ITALY AND OTHER PARTS OF EUROPE.

The notable events in the history of Naples under the House of Anjou were the glorious reign of Robert I, patron of Petrarch and Boccaccio; the savage inroads of German mercenaries; the ravages of the plague; the futile attempts to recover Sicily, and the profligate reigns of the two Joans, with the last of whom the rule of the French expired and the Spanish House of Aragon extended its sway from Sicily to Naples (1435).

The reign of Aragon was stormy and destructive, for wars and conspiracies followed one another almost without intermission. In 1495 the French invaded Naples, but were compelled to withdraw; in 1501 they returned and conquered the country; two years afterwards, Gonzalvo di Cordova drove out the French, and thereafter Sicily and Naples belonged to Spain for two hundred years, and were known as the Two Sicilies.

It was a terrible period for the two kingdoms. Ignorance, rapacity and oppression were everywhere; "no tax was imposed save with the apparent object of crushing commerce or destroying agriculture, and the viceregal palace and the tribunals of justice became public offices in which the highest dignities and most sacred interests of the State were openly bartered to the wealthiest bidder."

The War of the Spanish Succession involved the Two Sicilies and at its close Naples was in the hands of the Austrians and Sicily in the hands of Savoy, to remain thus, however, for

six years only, for in 1720 both Sicilies were under Austrian rule; in 1735 back in the possession of Spain, whose King, Don Carlos (Charles I), was the founder of the Bourbon dynasty. This reign was a period of liberal government and great prosperity, when art and literature were encouraged, public works were erected, and excavations were begun on the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

In the Napoleonic era, Naples was played back and forth in the hands of the Bonaparte family and their friends, but in 1815 the Bourbon family was restored, to continue its stormy existence until Naples took its place in United Italy.

XXIII. Rome and the Papal States. The rule of the Goths and the Lombards in Italy drove many Italians to look toward the Popes for protection, and the pertinacity with which they asserted the importance and dignity of Rome in time brought with it considerable temporal power. About A. D. 720 Gregory III, having quarreled with the Emperor, declared the independence of Rome, and from time to time, aided by various allies, the Popes added to their domains until in the seventeenth century they reached their widest extent, at which time they covered in compact form a section of Central Italy bounded on the northeast by the Adriatic, on the southeast by the Kingdom of Naples, on the southwest by the Mediterranean, on the west by Tuscany and Modena, and on the northwest by Lombardy and Venetia.

In 1798 the Papal States were taken by the French and made into the Roman Republic; in 1800 Pius obtained the States again, only to lose them almost immediately to the French. In 1814 the States were restored to the Pope, mainly through the influence of the non-Roman Catholic countries, Russia, Prussia and England. From that time on there was an intermittent but bitter struggle between the Popes and the people of the several States, growing out of bad government and arbitrary rule and quelled only by the intervention of foreign powers. Pius IX began a series of reforms that promised well but that failed to appease the dissatisfied, so that first Austria and then France were required to keep him in power. At last, in 1860, the four northern States revolted and were annexed to Sardinia. In the struggle for the unification of Italy the Papal forces were defeated, and in October, 1870, the last of the States voted for annexation to the Kingdom of Italy.

POMPEII AND MOUNT VESUVIUS

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST PERIOD
1100–1475

BEGINNINGS

INTRODUCTION. 1. *The Language.* The Italian language, like French, Spanish and the other "Romance languages," is a development of the Latin spoken by the common people of the territories subject to ancient Rome. This "vulgar Latin," or "romance," was in many important respects different from the classic literary Latin as we find it in the great Latin writers, though the literary tongue in ancient times was intelligible to those who spoke the vernacular. While the Teutonic invaders left traces on this popular language of Italy, yet the vocabulary that came from that source is limited. Italian is one of the modern continuations of this popular Latin tongue, and is not, as has been supposed, a "corruption" of literary Latin.

It must be remembered that Italy has always had a great variety of dialects, owing to the peculiar diversification of the country, and many of them which originated many centuries ago are in use to-day and have a limited literature of their own, with grammars and dictionaries. These dialects may be grouped under three heads corresponding to the Northern, Central and Southern portions of the peninsula, and all of them differ from the modern literary Italian, which is an elaboration of the Florentine, or Tuscan, dialect of Central Italy. Originally the dialects of Italy were on an equal footing. Among the reasons for the preëminence of Tuscan in the literary language of to-day is the fact that the three great Tuscan writers, Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, fixed its form in literary masterpieces and made it popular throughout Italy.

2. *Italian Literature and Its Divisions.* It is convenient to consider Italian literature in three periods, each of which has two marked divisions, a time of progress and a time of decline.

The first period begins at about 1100, with the first Italian productions, and may be ended about 1475, when there was a marked absorption of writers in the study of Greek and Latin classics. It was the period that culminated in the genius of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio.

The second period, extending from 1475 to 1675, covers the reigns of Lorenzo de Medici and of the Pope Leo X and includes the revival

of interest in the Italian language, the splendid outburst of genius in Ariosto, Tasso, Machiavelli and Galileo, and the conspicuous decline.

The third period runs from 1675 to the present time, and covers a phase of revival, a decline under French influence, and an increasing nationality under Metastasio, Goldoni, Alfieri and the great writers of the nineteenth century.

II. Latin Literature in Italy. Our conception of Italian literature does not hold a place for Latin, whatever the philologist may have to say about the unity and continuity of the literature of the Italian peninsula. We draw the line between them where a Roman familiar with Latin would be compelled to cease reading because he could not understand Italian. Nevertheless, it does not seem consistent wholly to disregard the Latin literature which was produced after it ceased to be Roman, and for that reason we will digress for a brief period before settling down definitely to the Italian.

An intellectual blight seemed to fall upon literary Italy for nearly six hundred years after Boëthius. During all those long and trying years very little was written except books on theology, law or some practical subject, and those apparently without regard to literary style or beauty. The effort of most of these writers was to provide the rudiments of education for monks and clergy and transmit in condensed form something of the cultural attainments of antiquity.

When the first thousand years of Christianity were completed, there was a rift in the darkness that had enshrouded Italy, and a depauperate literature of culture made its appearance. There were eminent theologians in the eleventh century who felt the desirability of culture; Guido of Arezzo, who has been called the Father of Modern Music, appeared, and from the Benedictine monastery, in which he was a monk, he started his musical reforms and introduced them in a hymn in honor of St. John the Baptist; and some poets worthy of note chanted the victories of Genoa and Pisa over the Saracens. However, it was the twelfth century before poetry appeared in noticeable quantity, and even then it was written in Latin and was fostered by royalty rather than by the people.

III. St. Francis of Assisi. Giovanni Bernadone was born at Assisi in 1182. His father was a wealthy merchant, who was in France at the birth and christening of his son and probably on his return substituted the name Francesco. The lad was not a diligent student at the priest's school to which he was sent, but he acquired a knowledge of Latin as well as of his own Umbrian dialect. His early manhood was like that of his friends and companions—gay, wasteful and dissolute; but, entering the army, he distinguished himself in a prolonged feud between Assisi and Perugia, until on the defeat of his native city he was taken prisoner. On his release he intended to take up arms

again, but a long illness, followed very soon by another equally grave, started him to thinking about his mode of life, and in the end he determined to renounce it. He then entered upon the life of asceticism which he followed to his death, with the result that his father disinherited him, he renounced all his earthly relatives, and declared that "henceforth he had but one Father, Him that is in heaven."

While praying one day in a ruined chapel, he saw a vision which determined his future life. Thereafter, clad only in a rough woolen garment, with a hempen cord about his waist, he began his lay preaching to the poor of Assisi, though often pelted with mud by his late companions.

By 1210 he and his disciples obtained the sanction of the Pope, and in 1223 the formal authorization of his order, the Franciscans. Of the growth of the order we cannot speak here nor of the wonderful career that continued untill 1226, when his health, undermined by his austerities, gave way entirely, and he died on the bare ground, where he had been placed at his request, near the little chapel in which he had received his vision.

A great deal was written concerning St. Francis not long after his death. His *Biography,* quoted under the section ASCETICISM; the *Fioretti* (*Little Flowers*), an adaptation in Italian of a Latin original and translated into Italian not far from 1322; and the *Speculum Perfectionis* (*Mirror of Perfection*), com-

From Fresco by Giotto, in Church of Santa Croce, Florence

DEATH OF ST. FRANCIS

pleted about 1318, are available in excellent English translations.

From the *Little Flowers,* translated by T. Okey, the two following chapters are taken. The first relates how St. Francis told Father Leo where perfect joy was to be found:

One winter's day, as St. Francis was going from Perugia with Friar Leo to St. Mary of the Angels, suffering sorely from the bitter cold, he called Friar Leo, that was going before him, and spake thus, "Friar Leo, albeit the friars minor in every land give good examples of holiness and edification, nevertheless write and note down diligently that perfect joy is not to be found therein." And St. Francis went his way a little farther, and called him a second time, saying, "O Friar Leo, even though the friar minor gave sight to the blind, made the crooked straight, cast out devils, made the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and restored speech to the dumb, and, what is a yet greater thing, raised to life those who have lain four days in the grave; write—perfect joy is not found there." And he journeyed on a little while, and cried aloud, "O Friar Leo, if the friar minor knew all tongues and all the sciences and all the Scriptures, so that he could foretell and reveal not only future things, but even the secrets of the conscience and of the soul; write—perfect joy is not there." Yet a little farther went St. Francis, and cried again aloud, "O Friar Leo, little sheep of God, even though the friar minor spake with the tongue of angels and knew the courses of the stars and the virtues of herbs, and were the hidden treasures of the earth revealed to him, and he knew the qualities of birds, and of fishes, and of all animals, and of man, and of trees, and stones, and roots, and waters; write—not there is perfect joy." And St. Francis went on again a little space, and cried aloud, "O Friar Leo, although the friar minor were skilled to preach so well that he should convert all the infidels to the faith of Christ; write

—not there is perfect joy.'' And when this fashion of talk had endured two good miles, Friar Leo asked him in great wonder and said, ''Father, prithee in God's name tell me where is perfect joy to be found?'' And St. Francis answered him thus, ''When we are come to St. Mary of the Angels, wet through with rain, frozen with cold, and foul with mire and tormented with hunger; and when we knock at the door, the doorkeeper cometh in a rage and saith, 'Who are ye?' and we say, 'We are two of your friars,' and he answers, 'Ye tell not true; ye are rather two knaves that go deceiving the world and stealing the alms of the poor; begone!' and he openeth not to us, and maketh us stay outside hungry and cold all night in the rain and snow; then if we endure patiently such cruelty, such abuse, and such insolent dismissal without complaint or murmuring, and believe humbly and charitably that that doorkeeper truly knows us, and that God maketh him to rail against us; O Friar Leo, write—there is perfect joy. And if we persevere in our knocking, and he issues forth and angrily drives us away, abusing us and smiting us on the cheek, saying, 'Go hence, ye vile thieves, get ye gone to the spital, for here ye shall neither eat nor lodge;' if this we suffer patiently with love and gladness; write, O Friar Leo—this is perfect joy. And if, constrained by hunger and by cold, we knock once more and pray with many tears that he open to us for the love of God and let us but come inside, and he more insolently than ever crieth, 'These be impudent rogues, I will pay them out as they deserve;' and issues forth with a big knotted stick and seizes us by our cowls and flings us on the ground and rolls us in the snow, bruising every bone in our bodies with that heavy stick—if we, thinking on the agony of the blessed Christ, endure all these things patiently and joyously for love of Him; write, O Friar Leo, that here and in this perfect joy is found. And now, Friar Leo, hear the conclusion. Above all the grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit that Christ giveth to His beloved is that of overcoming self, and for love of Him willingly to bear pain

and buffetings and revilings and discomfort; for in none other of God's gifts, save these, may we glory, seeing they are not ours, but of God. Wherefore the Apostle saith, 'What hast thou that is not of God, and if thou hast received it of Him, wherefore dost thou glory as if thou hadst it of thyself?' But in the cross of tribulation and of affliction we may glory, because this is ours. Therefore the Apostle saith, 'I will not glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.' "

The second chapter tells the story of St. Francis and the little boy friar:

A boy most pure and innocent was received into the Order, during the life of St. Francis, in a convent so small that the friars were of necessity constrained to sleep two in a bed. And St. Francis once came to the said convent, and at even, after compline, lay down to rest that he might rise up to pray in the night while the other friars slept, as he was wont to do. The said boy having set his heart on spying out diligently the ways of St. Francis, lay down to sleep beside St. Francis that he might understand his holiness, and chiefly what he did by night when he rose up; and in order that sleep might not beguile him, he tied his own cord to the cord of St. Francis, that he might feel when he stirred: and of this St. Francis perceived naught. But by night, during the first sleep, when all the friars were slumbering, St. Francis arose and found his cord thus tied; and he loosed it so gently that the boy felt it not, and went forth alone into the wood near the friary, and entered into a little cell there and betook himself to prayer. After some space the boy awoke, and finding his cord loosed, and St. Francis risen, he rose up likewise and went seeking him, and finding the door open which led to the wood, he thought St. Francis had gone thither, and he entered the wood. And coming nigh unto the place where St. Francis was praying, he began to hear much talking; and as he drew closer to see and understand what he heard, he beheld a wondrous light that encompassed St. Francis, wherein were Christ and

the Virgin Mary, and St. John the Baptist and the Evangelist, and an infinite multitude of angels that were speaking with St. Francis. Seeing and hearing this, the boy fell lifeless to the earth. And the mystery of that holy apparition being ended, St. Francis, as he returned to the house, stumbled with his foot against the boy, who lay as one dead, and in compassion lifted him up and carried him in his arms, even as the good shepherd doth his sheep. And then learning from him how he had beheld the said vision, St. Francis commanded him to tell it to no man, to wit, so long as he should live, and the boy increasing daily in the great grace of God and in devotion to St. Francis, became a valiant man in the Order, and after the death of St. Francis revealed the said vision to the friars.

From the *Mirror of Perfection* we select the following, which tells the penance St. Francis inflicted on a friar who misjudged a poor man:

When blessed Francis had gone to preach at a certain dwelling of the friars near Rocca Brizzi, it happened that on that day on which he should preach a certain poor and infirm man came unto him. On whom having much compassion, he began to speak to his fellow of his poverty and sickness, and his fellow said to him, "Brother, it is true that he seems poor enough; but it may be that in the whole province there is no one who wishes more to be rich than he." And being immediately severely reproved by blessed Francis, he confessed his fault. And blessed Francis said, "Wilt thou for this do the penance which I shall bid thee?" Who answered, "I will do it willingly." And he said to him, "Go and put off your tunic, and throw yourself naked at the poor man's feet, and tell him how thou hast sinned against him in speaking evil in that matter, and ask him to pray for you." He went therefore and did all the things which blessed Francis had told him. Which done, he arose and put on his tunic and returned to blessed Francis. And

blessed Francis said to him, "Wouldst thou know how thou hast sinned against him, nay, against Christ? When thou seest a poor man, thou oughtest to consider Him in Whose Name he cometh, namely, Christ. Who took our poverty and infirmity on Him: for the infirmity and poverty of this man, is as it were a mirror to us, wherein we may see and consider with pity, the sickness and poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Of the love which St. Francis had for all of God's creatures, the following two extracts from the *Mirror* tell:

Blessed Francis, wholly wrapped up in the love of God, discerned perfectly the goodness of God not only in his own soul, now adorned with the perfection of virtue, but in every creature. On account of which he had a singular and intimate love of creatures, especially of those in which was figured anything pertaining to God or the Order. Whence above all other birds he loved a certain little bird which is called the lark, or by the people, the cowled lark. And he used to say of it, "Sister Lark hath a cowl like a Religious; and she is a humble bird, because she goes willingly by the road to find there any food. And if she comes upon it in foulness, she draws it out and eats it. But flying she praises God very sweetly like a good Religious, despising earthly things, whose conversation is always in the heavens, and whose intent is always to the praise of God. Her clothes are like the earth (that is her feathers), and she gives an example to Religious that they should not have delicate and colored garments, but vile in price and color, as earth is viler than the other elements." And because he perceived this in them, he looked on them most willingly. Therefore it pleased the Lord, that these most holy little birds should show some sign of affection towards him in the hour of his death. For late in the Sabbath day, after vespers, before the night in which he passed away to the Lord, a great multitude of that kind

of birds called larks came on the roof of the house where he was lying; and flying about, made a wheel like a circle round the roof, and sweetly singing, seemed likewise to praise the Lord.

. . . . . .

We, who were with blessed Francis, and have written these things, bear testimony that many times we have heard him say, "If I were to speak to the Emperor, I would, supplicating and persuading him, tell him for the love of God and me to make a special law that no man should take or kill sister Larks, nor do them any harm. Likewise, that all the Podestas of the towns, and the Lords of castles and villages, should be bound every year on Christmas day to compel men to throw wheat and other grains outside the cities and castles, that our sister Larks may have something to eat, and also the other birds, on a day of such solemnity. And that for the reverence of the Son of God, Who rested on that night with the most blessed Virgin Mary between an Ox and an Ass in the manger, whoever shall have an Ox and an Ass shall be bound to provide for them on that night the best of good fodder. Likewise on that day, all poor men should be satisfied by the rich with good food." For the blessed Father had a greater reverence for Christmas day than for any other festival, saying, "Since the Lord had been born for us, it behoves us to be saved," and on account of which he wished that on that day every Christian should rejoice in the Lord; and for His love who gave Himself for us, that all should provide largely not only for the poor, but also for the animals and birds.

The following song of praise he is supposed to have written when the Lord certified him of His kingdom:

Most High, Omnipotent, Good Lord.
Thine be the praise, the glory, the honor, and all benediction.
To Thee alone, Most High, they are due,
and no man is worthy to mention Thee.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, with all Thy creatures,
above all Brother Sun,
who gives the day and lightens us therewith.

And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,
of Thee, Most High, he bears similitude.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Sister Moon and the stars,
in the heaven hast Thou formed them, clear and precious and comely.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Brother Wind,
and of the air, and the cloud, and of fair and of all weather,
by the which Thou givest to Thy creatures sustenance.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Sister Water,
which is much useful and humble and precious and pure.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Brother Fire,
by which Thou hast lightened the night,
and he is beautiful and joyful and robust and strong.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of our Sister Mother Earth,
which sustains and hath us in rule,
and produces divers fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of those who pardon for Thy
love and endure sickness and tribulations.

Blessed are they who will endure it in peace,
for by Thee, Most High, they shall be crowned.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no man living may escape;
woe to those who die in mortal sin:

Blessed are they who are found in Thy most holy will,
for the second death shall not work them ill.

Praise ye and bless my Lord, and give Him thanks,
and serve Him with great humility.

The following cantica, taken from a long poem on Divine Love, half ecstatic, half scholastic, and scarcely appreciable now, is the only passage spoken by Our Lord:

Set Love in order, thou that lovest Me.
Never was virtue out of order found;
And though I fill thy heart desirously,
By thine own virtue I must keep My ground:
When to My love thou dost bring charity,
Even she must come with order girt and gown'd.
Look how the trees are bound
To order, bearing fruit;
And by one thing compute,
In all things earthly, order's grace or gain.

All earthly things I had the making of
Were number'd and were measured then by Me;
And each was order'd to its end by Love,
Each kept, through order, clean for ministry.
Charity most of all, when known enough,
Is of her very nature orderly.
Lo, now! what heat in thee,
Soul, can have bred this rout?
Thou putt'st all order out.
Even this love's heat must be its curb and rein.

IV. Frederick II. If we must fix a date for the beginning of Italian literature, we must place it during the reign of Frederick II (Holy Roman Empire), and about the year 1220. Frederick's mother was Sicilian, and he was born near Ancona in Italy, so that he grew up with tastes and sympathies far more Italian than German. The University of Naples and several Sicilian schools were founded by Frederick, who also drew into his cultivated court

from all Italy the men of learning and of letters. At Frederick's court a school of vernacular poetry came into being. The influence of the troubadours, who had been a fixture in North Italy for about a hundred years, was still dominant in the subjects chosen and the style of the poetry, but the language was a hybrid mixture of dialectical elements, which show, however, a tendency toward the elaboration of a common national tongue for a country still centuries removed from political unity.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the great English poet, has given us a translation of Frederick's canzone, *Of His Lady in Bondage,* which we reproduce below. It is altogether probable that the translation is much better than the original:

For grief I am about to sing,
Even as another would for joy;
Mine eyes which the hot tears destroy
Are scarce enough for sorrowing;
To speak of such a grievous thing
Also my tongue I must employ,
Saying: Woe's me, who am full of woes!
Not while I live shall my sighs cease
For her in whom my heart found peace:
I am become like unto those
That cannot sleep for weariness,
Now I have lost my crimson rose.

And yet I will not call her lost;
She is not gone out of the earth;
She is but girded with a girth
Of hate, that clips her in like frost.
Thus says she every hour almost:—

"When I was born, 'twas an ill birth!
O that I never had been born,
If I am still to fall asleep
Weeping, and when I wake to weep;
If he whom I most loathe and scorn
Is still to have me his, and keep
Smiling about me night and morn!

"O that I never had been born
A woman! a poor, helpless fool,
Who can but stoop beneath the rule
Of him she needs must loathe and scorn!
If ever I feel less forlorn,
I stand all day in fear and dule,
Lest he discern it, and with rough
Speech mock at me, or with his smile
So hard you scare could call it guile.
No man is there to say, 'Enough.'
O, but if God waits a long while,
Death cannot always stand aloof!

"Thou, God the Lord, dost know all this:
Give me a little comfort then.
Him who is worst among bad men
Smite thou for me. Those limbs of his
Once hidden where the sharp worm is,
Perhaps I might see hope again.
Yet for a certain period
Would I seem like as one that saith
Strange things for grief, and murmureth
With smitten palms and hair abroad:
Still whispering under my held breath,
'Shall I not praise Thy name, O God?'

"Thou, God the Lord, dost know all this:
It is a very weary thing
Thus to be always trembling:
And till the breath of his life cease,
The hate in him will but increase,
And with his hate my suffering.

Each morn I hear his voice bid them
That watch me, to be faithful spies
Lest I go forth and see the skies;
Each night, to each, he saith the same;—
And in my soul and in mine eyes
There is a burning heat like flame."

Thus grieves she now; but she shall wear
This love of mine, whereof I spoke,
About her body for a cloak,
And for a garland in her hair,
Even yet: because I mean to prove,
Not to speak only, this my love.

V. CIELO DALCAMO. One of the few Sicilian poets of whose verses any remain is Cielo Dalcamo, or d'Alcamo, the exact form of whose name is a matter of dispute. His dialogue, *Lover and Lady,* is an excellent piece, especially in its translation by Rossetti. It is full of humor and sly jest at the expense of the habits of the time—even the knight confesses without a blush that he has stolen the Bible on which he swears loyalty! A close reading of the abridgment that follows will give bright pictures of medieval times:

HE

Thou sweetly-smelling fresh red rose
That near thy summer art,
Of whom each damsel and each dame
Would fain be counterpart;
Oh! from this fire to draw me forth
Be it in thy good heart:
For night or day there is no rest with me,
Thinking of none, my lady, but of thee.

SHE

If thou hast set thy thoughts on me,
Thou hast done a foolish thing.
Yea, all the pine-wood of this world
Together might'st thou bring,
And make thee ships, and plow the sea
Therewith for corn-sowing,
Ere any way to win me could be found:
For I am going to shear my locks all round.

HE

Lady, before thou shear thy locks
I hope I may be dead:
For I should lose such joy thereby
And gain such grief instead.
Merely to pass and look at thee,
Rose of the garden-bed,
Has comforted me much, once and again.
Oh! if thou wouldst but love, what were it then!

. . . . . .

SHE

And am I then to have no peace
Morning or evening?
I have strong coffers of my own
And much good gold therein;
So that if thou couldst offer me
The wealth of Saladin,
And add to that the Soldan's money-hoard,
Thy suit would not be anything toward.

HE

I have known many women, love,
Whose thoughts were high and proud,
And yet have been made gentle by
Man's speech not over loud.
If we but press ye long enough,
At length ye will be bow'd;
For still a woman's weaker than a man.
When the end comes, recall how this began.

SHE

God grant that I may die before
Any such end do come,—
Before the sight of a chaste maid
Seem to be troublesome!
I mark'd thee here all yester-eve
Lurking about my home,
And now I say, Leave climbing, lest thou fall,
For these thy words delight me not at all.

HE

How many are the cunning chains
Thou hast wound round my heart!
Only to think upon thy voice
Sometimes I groan apart.
For I did never love a maid
Of this world, as thou art,
So much as I love thee, thou crimson rose.
Thou wilt be mine at last: this my soul knows.

SHE

If I could think it would be so,
Small pride it were of mine
That all my beauty should be meant
But to make thee to shine.
Sooner than stoop to that I'd shear
These golden tresses fine,
And make one of some holy sisterhood;
Escaping so thy love, which is not good.

HE

If thou unto the cloister fly,
Thou cruel lady and cold,
Unto the cloister I will come
And by the cloister hold;
For such a conquest liketh me
Much better than much gold;
At matins and at vespers I shall be
Still where thou art. Have I not conquer'd thee?

. . . . . .

SHE

If thou have all this love for me,
Thou canst no better do
Than ask me of my father dear
And my dear mother too:
They willing, to the abbey-church
We will together go,
And, before Advent, thou and I will wed;
After the which, I'll do as thou hast said.

HE

These thy conditions, lady mine,
Are altogether nought;
Despite of them, I'll make a net
Wherein thou shalt be caught.
What, wilt thou put on wings to fly?
Of wax I think they're wrought,—
They'll let thee fall to earth, not rise with thee:
So, if thou canst, then keep thyself from me.

SHE

Think not to fright me with thy nets
And suchlike childish gear;
I am safe pent within the walls
Of this strong castle here;
A boy before he is a man
Could give me as much fear.
If suddenly thou get not hence again,
It is my prayer thou may'st be found and slain.

. . . . . .

HE

How many nosegays I have sent
Unto thy house, sweet soul!
At least till I am put to proof,
This scorn of thine control.
For if the wind, so fair for thee,
Turn ever and wax foul,
Be sure that thou shalt say when all is done,
"Now is my heart heavy for him that's gone."

SHE

If by my grief thou couldst be grieved,
God send me a grief soon!
I tell thee that though all my friends
Pray'd me as for a boon,
Saying, "Even for the love of us,
Love thou this worthless loon,"—
Thou shouldst not have the thing that thou dost hope.
No, verily; not for the realm o' the Pope.

. . . . . .

HE

Thou sayest truly, saying that
I have not any friend:
A landless stranger, lady mine,
None but his sword defend.
One year ago, my love began,
And now, is this the end?
Oh! the rich dress thou worest on that day,
Since when thou art walking at my side alway!

SHE

So 'twas my dress enamor'd thee!
What marvel? I did wear
A cloth of samite silver-flower'd,
And gems within my hair.
But one more word; if on Christ's Book
To wed me thou didst swear,
There's nothing now could win me to be thine:
I had rather make my bed in the sea-brine.

HE

And if thou make thy bed therein,
Most courteous lady and bland,
I'll follow all among the waves,
Paddling with foot and hand;
Then, when the sea hath done with thee,
I'll seek thee on the sand.
For I will not be conquer'd in this strife:
I'll wait, but win; or losing, lose my life.

. . . . . .

SHE

Is it even so? Learn then that I
Do love thee from my heart.
To-morrow, early in the day,
Come here, but now depart.
By thine obedience in this thing
I shall know what thou art,
And if thy love be real or nothing worth;
Do but go now, and I am thine henceforth.

HE

Nay, for such promise, my own life,
I will not stir a foot,
I've said, if thou wouldst tear away
My love even from its root,
I have a dagger at my side
Which thou may'st take to do't:
But as for going hence, it will not be.
O hate me not! my heart is burning me.

SHE

Think'st thou I know not that thy heart
Is hot and burns to death?
Of all that thou or I can say,
But one word succoreth.
Till thou upon the Holy Book
Give me thy bounden faith,
God is my witness that I will not yield:
For with thy sword 'twere better to be kill'd.

HE

Then on Christ's Book, borne with me still
To read from and to pray
(I took it, fairest, in a church,
The priest being gone away),
I swear that my whole self shall be
Thine always from this day.
And now at once give joy for all my grief,
Lest my soul fly, that's thinner than a leaf.

SHE

Now that this oath is sworn, sweet lord,
There is no need to speak:
My heart, that was so strong before,
Now feels itself grow weak.
If any of my words were harsh,
Thy pardon: I am meek
Now, and will give thee entrance presently.
It is best so, sith so it was to be.

VI. GUITTONE D'AREZZO. An unimportant writer, but one who had an extreme popularity in his own day, and one who seems to have been the first to give the sonnet its durable form, was Guittone di Arezzo, who was born probably about 1235, and who was in early life a riotous love poet, but after his conversion renounced the world, his wife and children, and joined the military order of Cavalieri di Santa Maria, better known perhaps as the Frati Gaudenti (Jolly Friars). Rossetti translated one sonnet of his, *To the Blessed Virgin Mary:*

Lady of Heaven, the mother glorified
Of glory, which is Jesus,—He whose death
Us from the gates of Hell delivereth
And our first parents' error sets aside:—
Behold this earthly Love, how his darts glide—
How sharpen'd—to what fate—throughout this earth!
Pitiful Mother, partner of our birth,
Win these from following where his flight doth guide.
And O, inspire in me that holy love
Which leads the soul back to its origin,
Till of all other love the link do fail.
This water only can this fire reprove,—
Only such cure suffice for such like sin;
As nail from out a plank is struck by nail.

VII. Guido Guinicelli. Only seven canzoni and five sonnets by Guinicelli are extant, but they give him a prominent position among the early poets and distinguish him from the troubadours by his more philosophical outlook on life and his more impressive and spirited love lyrics. Dante called him "the sage," in alluding to his canzone *Of the Gentle Heart.* We know very little of his life except that he practiced law and that he died about 1276, in exile, because of his adherence to the Ghibelline faction in his native city of Bologna.

Rossetti's translation of his sonnet *Concerning Lucy* is as follows:

When Lucy draws her mantle round her face,
So sweeter than all else she is to see,
That hence unto the hills there lives not he
Whose whole soul would not love her for her grace.
Then seems she like a daughter of some race
That holds high rule in France or Germany:
And a snake's head stricken off suddenly
Throbs never as then throbs my heart to embrace
Her body in these arms, even were she loth;—
To kiss her lips, to kiss her cheeks, to kiss
The lids of her two eyes which are two flames.
Yet what my heart so longs for, my heart blames:
For surely sorrow might be bred from this
Where some man's patient love abides its growth.

Guinicelli's finest production is the canzone *Of the Gentle Heart,* which Rossetti translates thus:

Within the gentle heart Love shelters him,
As birds within the green shade of the grove.
Before the gentle heart, in Nature's scheme,

Love was not, nor the gentle heart ere Love.
For with the sun, at once,
So sprang the light immediately; nor was
Its birth before the sun's.
And Love hath his effect in gentleness
Of very self; even as
Within the middle fire the heat's excess.

The fire of Love comes to the gentle heart
Like as its virtue to a precious stone;
To which no star its influence can impart
Till it is made a pure thing by the sun;
For when the sun hath smit
From out its essence that which there was vile,
The star endoweth it.
And so the heart created by God's breath
Pure, true, and clean from guile,
A woman, like a star, enamoreth.

In gentle heart Love for like reason is
For which the lamp's high flame is fann'd and bow'd:
Clear, piercing bright, it shines for its own bliss;
Nor would it burn there else, it is so proud.
For evil natures meet
With love as it were water met with fire,
As cold abhorring heat.
Through gentle heart Love doth a track divine—
Like knowing like; the same
As diamond runs through iron in the mine.

The sun strikes full upon the mud all day;
It remains vile, nor the sun's worth is less.
"By race I am gentle," the proud man doth say:
He is the mud, the sun is gentleness.
Let no man predicate
That aught the name of gentleness should have,
Even in a king's estate,
Except the heart there be a gentle man's.
The star-beam lights the wave,—
Heaven holds the star and the star's radiance.

God, in the understanding of high Heaven,
Burns more than in our sight the living sun;
There to behold His Face unveil'd is given;
And Heaven, whose will is homage paid to One,
Fulfills the things which live
In God, from the beginning excellent.
So should my lady give
That truth which in her eyes is glorified,
On which her heart is bent,
To me whose service waiteth at her side.

My lady, God shall ask, "What dared'st thou?"
(When my soul stands with all her acts review'd);
"Thou passed'st Heaven, into My sight, as now,
To make Me of vain love similitude.
To Me doth praise belong,
And to the Queen of all the realm of grace
Who endeth fraud and wrong."
Then may I plead: "As though from Thee he came,
Love wore an angel's face:
Lord, if I loved her, count it not my shame."

VIII. Two Minor Poets. Guido delle Colonne, a Sicilian, wrote a Latin romance on the fall of Troy and gained considerable fame thereby, but he also wrote a number of meritorious lyrics in the vernacular; as, for instance, the canzone *To Love and to His Lady,* which has been translated by Rossetti:

O Love, who all this while hast urged me on,
Shaking the reins, with never any rest—
Slacken for pity somewhat of thy haste;
I am oppress'd with languor and foredone—
Having outrun the power of sufferance,—
Having much more endured than who, through faith
That his heart holds, makes no account of death.
Love is assuredly a fair mischance,

And well may it be call'd a happy ill:
Yet thou, my lady, on this constant sting,
So sharp a thing, have thou some pity still—
Howbeit a sweet thing too, unless it kill.

O comely-favor'd, whose soft eyes prevail,
More fair than is another on this ground,—
Lift now my mournful heart out of its stound,
Which thus is bound for thee in great travail:
For a high gale a little rain may end.
Also, my lady, be not anger'd thou
That Love should thee enforce, to whom all bow.
There is but little shame to apprehend
If to a higher strength the conquest be;
And all the more to Love who conquers all.
Why then appall my heart with doubts of thee?
Courage and patience triumph certainly.

I do not say that with such loveliness
Such pride may not beseem; it suits thee well;
For in a lovely lady pride may dwell,
Lest homage fail and high esteem grow less:
Yet pride's excess is not a thing to praise.
Therefore, my lady, let thy harshness gain
Some touch of pity which may still restrain
Thy hand, ere Death cut short these hours and days.
The sun is very high and full of light,
And the more bright the higher he doth ride:
So let thy pride, my lady, and thy height,
Stand me in stead and turn to my delight.

Still inmostly I love thee, laboring still
That others may not know my secret smart
Oh! what a pain it is for the grieved heart
To hold apart and not to show its ill!
Yet by no will the face can hide the soul;
And ever with the eyes the heart has need
To be in all things willingly agreed.
It were a mighty strength that should control

The heart's fierce beat, and never speak a word:
    It were a mighty strength, I say again,
To hide such pain, and to be sovran lord
Of any heart that had such love to hoard.

For Love can make the wisest turn astray;
    Love, at its most, of measure still has least;
    He is the maddest man who loves the best;
It is Love's jest, to make men's heart alway
So hot that they by coldness cannot cool.
    The eyes unto the heart bear messages
    Of the beginnings of all pain and ease:
And thou, my lady, in thy hand dost rule
Mine eyes and heart which thou hast made thine own.
    Love rocks my life with tempests on the deep,
Even as a ship round which the winds are blown:
Thou art my pennon that will not go down.

Rustico di Filippo, who lived between 1200 and 1274, has been eulogized as a man of great attainments, but his fame rests upon his satirical verses. Two of the three sonnets translated by Rossetti will show the tenor of his biting verse. The first is *Of the Making of Master Messerin:*

When God had finish'd Master Messerin,
    He really thought it something to have done:
    Bird, man, and beast had got a chance in one,
And each felt flatter'd, it was hoped, therein.
For he is like a goose i' the windpipe thin,
    And like a cameleopard high i' the loins;
    To which, for manhood, you'll be told he joins
Some kinds of flesh-hues and a callow chin.
As to his singing, he affects the crow;
    As to his learning, beasts in general;
        And sets all square by dressing like a man.

God made him, having nothing else to do;
And proved there is not anything at all
He cannot make, if that's a thing He can.

The second is *Of Messer Ugolino:*

If any one had anything to say
To the Lord Ugolino, because he's
Not staunch, and never minds his promises,
'Twere hardly courteous, for it is his way.
Courteous it were to say such sayings nay:
As thus: He's true, sir, only takes his ease
And don't care merely if it plague or please,
And has good thoughts, no doubt, if they would stay.
Now I know he's so loyal every whit
And altogether worth such a good word
As worst would best and best would worst befit.
He'd love his party with a dear accord
If only he could once quite care for it,
But can't run post for any Law or Lord.

IX. The Forms of Italian Lyrics. The principal lyrical forms used by Italian poets are the canzone, the sonnet and the ballata.

1. In the canzone several varieties of structure in the stanza are allowable, but usually it commences with three unrhymed lines of eleven syllables each, followed by three lines which rhyme successively with their predecessors; a single line of an optional number of syllables, rhyming with the third and sixth; five or six lines of any established length on an entirely different and optional rhyme scheme, yet usually repeating at least once the last rhyme in the first system. Nearly typical examples are found in the *Dispute with Death* of Guido Cavalcanti, from which we select, as an example, one stanza from Rossetti's translation:

Now, when I heard the sudden dreadful voice
Wake thus within to cruel utterance,
Whereby the very heart of hearts did fail,
My spirit might not any more rejoice,
But fell from its courageous pride at once,
And turn'd to fly, where flight may not avail.
Then slowly 'gan some strength to re-inhale
The trembling life which heard that whisper speak,
And had conceived the sense with sore travail
Till in the mouth it murmur'd, very weak,
Saying: "Youth, wealth, and beauty, these have I:
O Death! remit thy claim—I would not die."

2. The sonnet is perhaps Italy's most valuable poetic gift to the world, for nothing surpasses it in its ability to express a single thought with dignity and grace. Nevertheless, it is one of the most difficult of lyrics to compose, because of the limitations in form and the restrictions in thought. An Italian sonnet, strictly speaking, consists of fourteen lines, the first eight of which constitute the octave, the last six the sestet. One major thought only appears in the sonnet, which is generalized in the octave and specialized in the sestet. The octave is of two quatrains in which the rhyme scheme is the same, making the first, fourth, fifth and eighth lines rhyme, and the second, third, sixth and seventh. Four structures are allowed in the sestet, and any departure from them seems to lessen the beauty of the work. Rossetti's translation of one of Dante's most beautiful sonnets is an excellent example, though the rhymes of the sestet are not in the most common arrangement:

My lady looks so gentle and so pure
When yielding salutation by the way,
That the tongue trembles and has nought to say,
And the eyes, which fain would see, may not endure.
And still, amid the praise she hears secure,
She walks with humbleness for her array;
Seeming a creature sent from Heaven to stay
On earth, and show a miracle made sure.
She is so pleasant in the eyes of men
That through the sight the inmost heart doth gain
A sweetness which needs proof to know it by:
And from between her lips there seems to move
A soothing spirit that is full of love,
Saying for ever to the soul, "O sigh!"

3. The ballata, Boswell says, "is properly a lyric of two or more stanzas, in the first of which is set out the theme to be amplified in the following." It is not confined by strict rules of versification, and often closes with an envoy, or partial summing up of the thought. The following translation by Rossetti is of a ballata by Guido Cavalcanti, *Of his Lady Among Other Ladies:*

With other women I beheld my love;
Not that the rest were women to mine eyes,
Who only as her shadows seem'd to move.

I do not praise her more than with the truth,
Nor blame I these if it be rightly read.

But while I speak, a thought I may not soothe
Says to my senses: "Soon shall ye be dead,
If for my sake your tears ye will not shed."

And then the eyes yield passage, at that thought,
To the heart's weeping, which forgets her not.

X. Conclusion. Thus we arrive at the age of Dante and find lyrical poetry as the principal achievement hitherto in the Italian language. While Italian prose writings are by no means lacking, Latin still was firmly entrenched in the fields normally covered by prose. Yet when the time was ripe, beautiful, correct Tuscan prose appeared as if spontaneously, though the possibility of its sudden appearance testifies to the fact that intellectual influences were acting even during the depths of the Dark Ages and that there always was a measure of real refinement in the mass of the people, however it might be concealed by the storm and stress above and around it.

During the latter part of the preliminary period we have just been considering there was not only a marked improvement in quality, but there was a great increase in the quantity of literature produced, and political poems, satires and didactic pieces were common. While these replaced the amorous ditties of the earlier years, they by no means were superior always, and the improvement was rather in the work of individuals, who rose above the common level but never approximated that to which Italian literature was to rise under the influence of Dante.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIRST PERIOD (CONTINUED)

1100–1475

DANTE AND "LA VITA NUOVA"

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. Dante (Durante) Alighieri was one of the greatest poets of all time, and incomparably the greatest among Italians. "His is a name," to quote from M. F. Rossetti, "unlimited in place and period. Not Italy, but the Universe, is his birthplace; not the fourteenth century, but all Time, is his epoch. He rises before us and above us like the Pyramids—awful, massive, solitary; the embodiment of the character, the realization of the science, of his clime and day; yet the outcome of a far wider past, the standard of a far wider future."

Although quite different in tone from most of the biographies of Dante, the brief work of

Leigh Hunt gives as veracious a picture as any, and accordingly the following account is condensed from that source:

Dante Alighieri, who has always been known by his Christian rather than surname (partly owing to the Italian predilection for Christian names, and partly to the unsettled state of patronymics in his time), was the son of a lawyer of good family in Florence, and was born in that city on the 14th of May, 1265 (sixty-three years before the birth of Chaucer).

Of the mother of Dante nothing is known except that she was his father's second wife, and that her Christian name was Bella, or perhaps surname Bello. It might, however, be conjectured, from the remarkable and only opportunity which our author has taken of alluding to her, that he derived his disdainful character rather from his mother than father. The father appears to have died during the boyhood of his illustrious son.

The future poet, before he had completed his ninth year, conceived a romantic attachment to a little lady who had just entered hers, and who has attained a celebrity of which she was destined to know nothing. This was the famous Beatrice Portinari, daughter of a rich Florentine who founded more than one charitable institution. She married another man, and died in her youth; but retained the platonical homage of her young admirer, living and dead, and became the heroine of his great poem.

The natural tendencies of a poetical temperament (oftener evinced in a like manner than the world in general suppose) not only made the boy-poet fall in love, but, in the truly Elysian state of the heart at that innocent and adoring time of life, made him fancy he had discovered a goddess in the object of his love; and strength of purpose as well as imagination made him grow up in the fancy. He disclosed himself, as time advanced, only by his manner—received complacent recognitions in company from the young lady—offended her by seeming to devote himself to another—rendered

DANTE'S HOUSE

PADUA

SHOWING THE BEAUTY AND DELICACY OF THE ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT OF EXTERIORS IN ITALY IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

himself the sport of her and her young friends by his adoring timidity—in short, constituted her a paragon of perfection, and enabled her, by so doing, to show that she was none. He says, that finding himself unexpectedly near her one day in company, he trembled so, and underwent such change of countenance, that many of the ladies present began to laugh with her about him: "You laugh with the other ladies to see how I look; and do not think, lady, what it is that renders me so strange a figure at sight of your beauty."

Now, it is to be admitted, that a young lady, if she is not very wise, may laugh at her lover with her companions, and yet return his love, after her fashion; but the fair Portinari laughs and marries another. Some less melancholy face, some more intelligible courtship, triumphed over the questionable flattery of the poet's gratuitous worship; and the idol of Dante Alighieri became the wife of Messer Simone de' Bardi. Not a word does he say on that mortifying point. It transpired from a clause in her father's will.

Meantime, though the young poet's father had died, nothing was wanting on the part of his guardians, or perhaps his mother, to furnish him with an excellent education. It was so complete, as to enable him to become master of all the knowledge of his time; and he added to this learning more than a taste for drawing and music. He speaks of himself as drawing an angel in his tablets on the first anniversary of Beatrice's death. One of his instructors was Brunetto Latini, the most famous scholar then living; and he studied both at the universities of Padua and Bologna. At eighteen, perhaps sooner, he had shown such a genius for poetry as to attract the friendship of Guido Cavalcante, a young noble of a philosophical as well as poetical turn of mind, who has retained a reputation with posterity: and it was probably at the same time he became acquainted with Giotto, who drew his likeness, and with Casella, the musician, whom he greets with so much tenderness in the other world.

Nor were his duties as a citizen forgotten. The year before Beatrice's death, he was at the battle of Campaldino, which his countrymen gained against the people of Arezzo; and the year after it he was present at the taking of Caprona from the Pisans. It has been supposed that he once studied medicine with a view to it as a profession; but the conjecture probably originated in nothing more than his having entered himself in one of the city companies (which happened to be the medical) for the purpose of qualifying himself to accept office; a condition exacted of the gentry by the then democratic tendencies of the Republic. It is asserted also, by an early commentator, that he entered the Franciscan order of friars, but quitted it before he was professed; and, indeed, the circumstance is not unlikely, considering his agitated and impatient turn of mind. Perhaps he fancied that he had done with the world when it lost the wife of Simone de' Bardi.

Would the great but splenetic poet have made an angel and a saint of Beatrice, had he married her? He never utters the name of the woman whom he did marry. Gemma Donati was a kinswoman of the powerful family of that name. It seems not improbable, from some passages in his works, that she was the young lady whom he speaks of as taking pity on him on account of his passion for Beatrice; and in common justice to his feelings as a man and a gentleman, it is surely to be concluded that he felt some sort of passion for his bride, if not of a very spiritual sort; though he afterwards did not scruple to intimate that he was ashamed of it, and Beatrice is made to rebuke him in the other world for thinking of any body after herself. At any rate, he probably roused what was excitable in his wife's temper, with provocations from his own; for the nature of the latter is not to be doubted, whereas there is nothing but tradition to show for the bitterness of hers. Foscolo is of opinion that the tradition itself arose simply from a rhetorical flourish of Boccaccio's, in his "Life of Dante," against the marriages of men of letters; though Boccaccio him-

self expressly adds that he knows nothing to the disadvantage of the poet's wife, except that her husband, after quitting Florence, would never either come where she was, or suffer her to come to him, mother as she was by him of so many children;—a statement, it must be confessed, not a little encouraging to the tradition. Be this as it may, Dante married in his twenty-sixth year; wrote an adoring account of his first love in his twenty-eighth; and among the six children which Gemma brought him, had a daughter whom he named Beatrice, in honor, it is understood, of the fair Portinari; which surely was either a very great compliment, or no mean trial to the temper of the mother.

Dante was born and bred a Guelph: he had twice borne arms for his country against Ghibelline neighbors; and now, at the age of thirty-five, in the ninth of his marriage, and last of his residence with his wife, he was appointed chief of the temporary administrators of affairs, called Priors;—functionaries who held office only for two months.

Unfortunately, at that moment, his party had become subdivided and, the consequences becoming serious, the Blacks proposed to bring in, as mediator, the French Prince, Charles of Valois, then in arms for the Pope against the Emperor; but the Whites, of whom Dante was one, were hostile to the measure; and in order to prevent it, he and his brother magistrates expelled for a time the heads of both factions, to the satisfaction of neither. The Whites accused them of secretly leaning to the Ghibellines, and the Blacks of openly favoring the Whites; who being, indeed, allowed to come back before their time, on the alleged ground of the unwholesomeness of their place of exile, which was fatal to Dante's friend Cavalcante, gave a color to the charge. Dante answered it by saying, that he had then quitted office; but he could not show that he had lost his influence. Meantime, Charles was still urged to interfere, and Dante was sent ambassador to the Pope to obtain his disapprobation of interference; but the Pope (Boniface the Eighth), who

had probably discovered that the Whites had ceased to care for anything but their own disputes, and who, at all events, did not like their objection to his representative, beguiled the ambassador and encouraged the French prince; the Blacks, in consequence, regained their ascendancy; and the luckless poet, during his absence, was denounced as a corrupt administrator of affairs, guilty of peculation; was severely mulcted; banished from Tuscany for two years; and subsequently, for contumaciousness, was sentenced to be burnt alive, in case he returned. He never did return.

From that day forth, Dante never beheld again his home or his wife. Her relations obtained possession of power, but no use was made of it except to keep him in exile. He had not accorded with them; and perhaps half the secret of his conjugal discomfort was owing to politics. It is the opinion of some, that the married couple were not sorry to part; others think that the wife remained behind, solely to scrape together what property she could, and bring up the children.

Dante now certainly did what his enemies had accused him of wishing to do: he joined the old exiles whom he had helped to make such, the party of the Ghibellines. He alleges, that he never was really of any party but his own; a naive confession, probably true in one sense, considering his scorn of other people, his great intellectual superiority, and the large views he had for the whole Italian people. And, indeed, he soon quarreled in private with the individuals composing his new party, however staunch he apparently remained to their cause.

With no money in his purse, and no place in which to lay his head, except such as chance patrons afforded him, he now began to wander over Italy, like some lonely lion of a man, "grudging in his great disdain." At one moment he was conspiring and hoping; at another, despairing and endeavoring to conciliate his beautiful Florence: now again catching hope from some new movement of the Emperor's; and then, not very handsomely threatening and re-abusing her; but always pondering and grieving,

or trying to appease his thoughts with some composition, chiefly of his great work. It is conjectured, that whenever anything particularly affected him, whether with joy or sorrow, he put it, hot with the impression, into his "sacred poem." He encouraged, if not personally assisted, two ineffectual attempts of the Ghibellines against Florence; and learnt to know meanwhile, as he affectingly tells us, "how hard it was to climb other people's stairs, and how salt the taste of bread is that is not our own." It is even thought not improbable, from one awful passage of his poem, that he may have "placed himself in some public way," and, "stripping his visage of all shame, and trembling in his very vitals," have stretched out his hand "for charity"—an image of suffering, which, proud as he was, yet considering how great a man, is almost enough to make one's common nature stoop down for pardon at his feet.

It was probable in the middle period of his exile, that in one of the moments of his greatest longing for his native country, he wrote that affecting passage in "Convito," which was evidently a direct effort at conciliation. Excusing himself for some harshness and obscurity in the style of that work, he exclaims: "Ah! would it had pleased the Dispenser of all things that this excuse had never been needed; that neither others had done me wrong, nor myself undergone penalty undeservedly—the penalty, I say, of exile and of poverty. For it pleased the citizens of the fairest and most renowned daughter of Rome—Florence—to cast me out of her most sweet bosom, where I was born, and bred, and passed half of the life of man, and in which, with her good leave, I still desire with all my heart to repose my weary spirit, and finish the days allotted to me; and so I have wandered in almost every place to which our language extends, a stranger, almost a beggar, exposing against my will the wounds given me by fortune, too often unjustly imputed to the sufferer's fault. Truly I have been a vessel without sail and without rudder, driven about upon different ports and shores by the dry wind that springs out of

dolorous poverty; and hence have I appeared vile in the eyes of many, who, perhaps, by some better report had conceived of me a different impression, and in whose sight not only has my person become thus debased, but an unworthy opinion created of everything which I did, or which I had to do."

At one time he received permission to return to Florence, on conditions which he justly refused and resented in the following noble letter to a kinsman:

"From your letter, which I received with due respect and affection, I observe how much you have at heart my restoration to my country. I am bound to you the more gratefully, inasmuch as an exile rarely finds a friend. But after mature consideration, I must, by my answer, disappoint the wishes of some little minds; and I confide in the judgment to which your impartiality and prudence will lead you. Your nephew and mine has written to me, what indeed had been mentioned by many other friends, that by a decree concerning the exiles, I am allowed to return to Florence, provided I pay a certain sum of money, and submit to the humiliation of asking and receiving absolution; wherein, my Father, I see two propositions that are ridiculous and impertinent. I speak of the impertinence of those who mention such conditions to me; for in your letter, dictated by judgment and discretion, there is no such thing. Is such an invitation, then, to return to his country glorious to Dante Allighieri, after suffering in exile almost fifteen years? Is it thus they would recompense innocence which all the world knows, and the labor and fatigue of unremitting study? Far from the man who is familiar with philosophy be the senseless baseness of a heart of earth, that could act like a little sciolist, and imitate the infamy of some others, by offering himself up as it were in chains; far from the man who cries aloud for justice, this compromise by his money with his persecutors. No, my Father, this is not the way that shall lead me back to my country. I will return with hasty steps, if you or any other can open to me a way that shall not derogate from

the fame and honor of Dante; but if by no such way Florence can be entered, then Florence I shall never enter. What! shall I not everywhere enjoy the light of the sun and stars? and may I not seek and contemplate, in every corner of the earth, under the canopy of heaven, consoling and delightful truth, without first rendering myself inglorious, nay infamous, to the people and Republic of Florence? Bread, I hope, will not fail me."

Had Dante's pride and indignation always vented themselves in this truly exalted manner, never could the admirers of his genius have refused him their sympathy; and never, I conceive, need he either have brought his exile upon him, or closed it as he did. To that close we have now come, and it is truly melancholy and mortifying. Failure in a negotiation with the Venetians for his patron, Guido Novello, is supposed to have been the last bitter drop which made the cup of his endurance run over. He returned from Venice to Ravenna, worn out, and there died, after fifteen years' absence from his country, in the year 1321, aged fifty-seven. His life had been so agitated that it probably would not have lasted so long but for the solace of his poetry and the glory which he knew it must produce him. Guido gave him a sumptuous funeral, and intended to give him a monument; but such was the state of Italy in those times, that he himself died in exile the year after. The monument, however, and one of a noble sort, was subsequently bestowed by the father of Cardinal Bembo, in 1483; and another, still nobler, as late as 1780, by Cardinal Gonzaga. His countrymen, in after years, made two solemn applications for the removal of his dust to Florence; but the just pride of the Ravennese refused them.

Of the exile's family, three sons died young; the daughter went into a nunnery; and the two remaining brothers, who ultimately joined their father in his banishment, became respectable men of letters, and left families in Ravenna.

The manner and general appearance of Dante have been minutely recorded, and are in striking agreement

with his character. The poet was of middle height, of slow and serious deportment, had a long, dark visage, large, piercing eyes, large jaws, an aquiline nose, a projecting under lip, and thick curling hair—an aspect announcing determination and melancholy.

He dressed with a becoming gravity; was temperate in his diet; a great student; seldom spoke, unless spoken to, but always to the purpose; and almost all the anecdotes recorded of him, except by himself, are full of pride and sarcasm. He was so swarthy that a woman, as he was going by a door in Verona, is said to have pointed him out to another with a remark which made the saturnine poet smile: "That is the man who goes to hell whenever he pleases, and brings back news of the people there." On which her companion observed: "Very likely; don't you see what a curly beard he has; and what a dark face? owing, I dare say, to the heat and smoke."

He was evidently a passionate lover of painting and music; is thought to have been less strict in his conduct in regard to the sex than might be supposed from his platonical aspirations; could be very social when he was young, as may be gathered from the sonnet addressed to his friend Cavalcante about a party for a boat; and though his poetry was so intense and weighty, the laudable minuteness of a biographer has informed us that his handwriting, besides being neat and precise, was of a long and particularly thin character—"meager" is his word.

II. The Works of Dante. Before taking up the works of Dante in detail, it is well to consider his entire literary production. His writings fall into three distinct periods. The first period includes the *Vita Nuova* (*New Life*) with its lyrics, and is the epoch during which the youthful poet began to worship Beatrice and promised to write of her things that had

From Painting by Giotto

DANTE

1265–1321

never before been written of any woman. The second period is that of middle life, with its political turmoil, passion and philosophical research. During that time he wrote the greater part of his lyrics, the political letters connected with Henry VII, probably the Latin treatise *De Monarchia,* and the two unfinished prose treatises, the *Convivio* and *De Vulgari Eloquentia.* The last period is that of the *Divina Commedia,* in which the poet returns to Beatrice as a wonderful allegorical figure, and in which he wrote two eclogues and a number of letters to influential friends. Besides what we have mentioned, there are a number of minor things frequently attributed to Dante, but their authorship seems more or less hypothetical. Of the *Vita Nuova* and the *Divina Commedia* we shall treat at length, but the other works, important as they may have been in the history of Italian culture, must unfortunately here be dismissed with the brief mention we have made of them.

III. THE "VITA NUOVA." Our knowledge of Dante's outer life is, as we have intimated, rather uncertain and incomplete, but we have a record of the spiritual life of his youth, written about 1292, which is not only the first book of genius written in Italian but is also the first really important work in Italian prose.

The *Vita Nuova* is the record of Dante's platonic love for the Beatrice of his childhood, a person whom, if she really existed, he saw but very few times, with whom he exchanged

very few words, and who never recognized him or knew of the immortality which he was conferring upon her. Extraordinary, then, in every respect is this curious production, which bares the soul of the writer completely in prose varied by sonnets and canzoni, the meaning of each of which is carefully explained by the poet as he proceeds. It is more than literature; it is a real human document, but when one lays it aside the impression left is that of a spiritualized Dante and Beatrice: it is too ethereal to seem wholly human after all.

In one of his first lyrics he alludes to his indebtedness to Guinicelli for the inspiration which proceeded from the canzone *Of the Gentle Heart,* which we have already quoted. Beautiful as that lyric is, those of Dante in the *Vita Nuova* excel it in almost every respect. But instead of commenting further upon this remarkable production, let us study it first hand in a series of liberal extracts from the translation by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, extracts which are sufficiently long and varied to give a comprehensive idea of the whole production. We have taken no liberties with Rossetti's translation, except to turn the few Latin phrases into English:

> In that part of the book of my memory before the which is little that can be read, there is a rubric, saying, "Here beginneth the new life." Under such rubric I find written many things; and among them the words which I purpose to copy into this little book; if not all of them, at the least their substance.

Nine times already since my birth had the heaven of light returned to the selfsame point almost, as concerns its own revolution, when first the glorious Lady of my mind was made manifest to mine eyes; even she who was called Beatrice by many who knew not wherefore. She had already been in this life for so long as that, within her time, the starry heaven had moved towards the Eastern quarter one of the twelve parts of a degree; so that she appeared to me at the beginning of her ninth year almost, and I saw her almost at the end of my ninth year. Her dress, on that day, was of a most noble color, a subdued and goodly crimson, girdled and adorned in such sort as best suited with her very tender age. At that moment, I say most truly that the spirit of life, which hath its dwelling in the secretest chamber of the heart, began to tremble so violently that the least pulses of my body shook therewith; and in trembling it said these words: "Here is a deity stronger than I; who, coming, shall rule over me." At that moment the animate spirit, which dwelleth in the lofty chamber whither all the senses carry their perceptions, was filled with wonder, and speaking more especially unto the spirits of the eyes, said these words: "Your beatitude hath now been made manifest unto you." At that moment the natural spirit, which dwelleth there where our nourishment is administered, began to weep, and in weeping said these words: "Alas! how often shall I be disturbed from this time forth."

. . . . . .

After the lapse of so many days that nine years exactly were completed since the above-written appearance of this most gracious being, on the last of those days it happened that the same wonderful lady appeared to me dressed all in pure white, between two gentle ladies elder than she. And passing through a street, she turned her eyes thither where I stood sorely abashed: and by her unspeakable courtesy, which is now guerdoned in the Great Cycle, she saluted me with so virtuous a bearing that I seemed then and there to behold the very limits of blessedness. The

hour of her most sweet salutation was certainly the ninth of that day; and because it was the first time that any words from her reached mine ears, I came into such sweetness that I parted thence as one intoxicated. And betaking me to the loneliness of mine own room, I fell to thinking of this most courteous lady, thinking of whom I was overtaken by a pleasant slumber, wherein a marvelous vision was presented to me: for there appeared to be in my room a mist of the color of fire, within the which I discerned the figure of a lord of terrible aspect to such as should gaze upon him, but who seemed therewithal to rejoice inwardly that it was a marvel to see. Speaking he said many things, among the which I could understand but few; and of these, this: "I am thy master." In his arms it seemed to me that a person was sleeping, covered only with a blood-colored cloth; upon whom looking very attentively, I knew that it was the lady of the salutation who had deigned the day before to salute me. And he who held her held also in his hand a thing that was burning in flames; and he said to me, "Behold thy heart." But when he had remained with me a little while, I thought that he set himself to awaken her that slept; after the which he made her to eat that thing which flamed in his hand; and she ate as one fearing. Then, having waited again a space, all his joy was turned into most bitter weeping; and as he wept he gathered the lady into his arms, and it seemed to me that he went with her up towards heaven; whereby such a great anguish came upon me that my light slumber could not endure through it, but was suddenly broken. And immediately having considered, I knew that the hour wherein this vision had been made manifest to me was the fourth hour (which is to say, the first of the nine last hours) of the night.

Then, musing on what I had seen, I proposed to relate the same to many poets who were famous in that day: and for that I had myself in some sort the art of discoursing with rhyme, I resolved on making a sonnet, in the which, having saluted all such as are subject unto Love, and

entreated them to expound my vision, I should write unto them those things which I had seen in my sleep. And the sonnet I made was this:

To every heart which the sweet pain doth move,
And unto which these words may now be brought
For true interpretation and kind thought,
Be greeting in our Lord's name, which is Love.
Of those long hours wherein the stars, above,
Wake and keep watch, the third was almost nought
When Love was shown me with such terrors fraught
As may not carelessly be spoken of.
He seem'd like one who is full of joy, and had
My heart within his hand, and on his arm
My lady, with a mantle round her, slept;
Whom (having waken'd her) anon he made
To eat that heart; she ate, as fearing harm.
Then he went out; and as he went, he wept.

. . . . . .

All ye that pass along Love's trodden way,
Pause ye a while and say
If there be any grief like unto mine:
I pray you that you hearken a short space
Patiently, if my case
Be not a piteous marvel and a sign.

Love (never, certes, for my worthless part,
But of his own great heart)
Vouchsafed to me a life so calm and sweet
That oft I heard folk question as I went
What such great gladness meant:—
They spoke of it behind me in the street.

But now that fearless bearing is all gone
Which with Love's hoarded wealth was given me;
Till I am grown to be
So poor that I have dread to think thereon.

And thus it is that I, being like as one
Who is ashamed and hides his poverty,

Without seem full of glee,
And let my heart within travail and moan.

. . . . . .

After this battling with many thoughts, it chanced on a day that my most gracious lady was with a gathering of ladies in a certain place; to the which I was conducted by a friend of mine; he thinking to do me a great pleasure by showing me the beauty of so many women. Then I, hardly knowing whereunto he conducted me, but trusting in him (who yet was leading his friend to the last verge of life), made question: "To what end are we come among these ladies?" and he answered: "To the end that they may be worthily served." And they were assembled around a gentlewoman who was given in marriage on that day; the custom of the city being that these should bear her company when she sat down for the first time at table in the house of her husband. Therefore I, as was my friend's pleasure, resolved to stay with him and do honor to those ladies.

But as soon as I had thus resolved, I began to feel a faintness and a throbbing at my left side, which soon took possession of my whole body. Whereupon I remember that I covertly leaned my back unto a painting that ran round the walls of that house; and being fearful lest my trembling should be discerned of them, I lifted mine eyes to look on those ladies, and then first perceived among them the excellent Beatrice. And when I perceived her, all my senses were overpowered by the great lordship that Love obtained, finding himself so near unto that most gracious being, until nothing but the spirits of sight remained to me; and even these remained driven out of their own instruments because Love entered in that honored place of theirs, that so he might the better behold her. And although I was other than at first, I grieved for the spirits so expelled which kept up a sore lament, saying: "If he had not in this wise thrust us forth, we also should behold the marvel of this lady." By this, many of her friends, having discerned my confusion, began to wonder; and together with herself, kept

whispering of me and mocking me. Whereupon my friend, who knew not what to conceive, took me by the hands, and drawing me forth from among them, required to know what ailed me. Then, having first held me at quiet for a space until my perceptions were come back to me, I made answer to my friend: "Of a surety I have now set my feet on that point of life, beyond the which he must not pass who would return."

Afterwards, leaving him, I went back to the room where I had wept before; and again weeping and ashamed, said: "If this lady but knew of my condition, I do not think that she would thus mock at me; nay, I am sure that she must needs feel some pity." And in my weeping I bethought me to write certain words in the which, speaking to her, I should signify the occasion of my disfigurement, telling her also how I knew that she had no knowledge thereof: which, if it were known, I was certain must move others to pity. And then, because I hoped that peradventure it might come into her hearing, I wrote this sonnet:

Even as the others mock, thou mockest me;
Not dreaming, noble lady, whence it is
That I am taken with strange semblances,
Seeing thy face which is so fair to see:
For else, compassion would not suffer thee
To grieve my heart with such harsh scoffs as these.
Lo! Love, when thou art present, sits at ease,
And bears his mastership so mightily,
That all my troubled senses he thrusts out,
Sorely tormenting some, and slaying some,
Till none but he is left and has free range
To gaze on thee. This makes my face to change
Into another's; while I stand all dumb,
And hear my senses clamor in their rout.

. . . . . .

The thoughts are broken in my memory,
Thou lovely Joy, whene'er I see thy face;
When thou art near me, Love fills up the space,

Often repeating, "If death irk thee, fly."
My face shows my heart's color, verily,
Which, fainting, seeks for any leaning-place;
Till, in the drunken terror of disgrace,
The very stones seem to be shrieking, "Die!"
It were a grievous sin, if one should not
Strive then to comfort my bewilder'd mind
(Though merely with a simple pitying),
For the great anguish which thy scorn has wrought
In the dead sight o' the eyes grown nearly blind,
Which look for death as for a blessed thing.

. . . . . .

Thereafter, this sonnet bred in me desire to write down in verse four other things touching my condition, the which things it seemed to me that I had not yet made manifest. The first among these was the grief that possessed me very often, remembering the strangeness which Love wrought in me; the second was, how Love many times assailed me so suddenly and with such strength that I had no other life remaining except a thought which spake of my lady; the third was, how when Love did battle with me in this wise, I would rise up all colorless, if so I might see my lady, conceiving that the sight of her would defend me against the assault of Love, and altogether forgetting that which her presence brought unto me; and the fourth was, how when I saw her, the sight not only defended me not, but took away the little life that remained to me. And I said these four things in a sonnet, which is this:

At whiles (yea oftentimes) I muse over
The quality of anguish that is mine
Through Love: then pity makes my voice to pine
Saying, "Is any else thus, anywhere?"
Love smiteth me, whose strength is ill to bear;
So that of all my life is left no sign
Except one thought; and that, because 'tis thine,
Leaves not the body but abideth there.
And then if I, whom other aid forsook,

DANTE MONUMENT
TRENT, ITALY

Would aid myself, and innocent of art
Would fain have sight of thee as a last hope,
No sooner do I lift mine eyes to look
Than the blood seems as shaken from my heart,
And all my pulses beat at once and stop.

. . . . . .

And then I resolved that thenceforward I would choose for the theme of my writings only the praise of this most gracious being. But when I had thought exceedingly, it seemed to me that I had taken to myself a theme which was much too lofty, so that I dared not begin; and I remained during several days in the desire of speaking, and the fear of beginning. After which it happened, as I passed one day along a path which lay beside a stream of very clear water, that there came upon me a great desire to say somewhat in rhyme; but when I began thinking how I should say it, methought that to speak of her were unseemly, unless I spoke to other ladies in the second person; which is to say, not to *any* other ladies; but only to such as are so called because they are gentle, let alone for mere womanhood. Whereupon I declare that my tongue spake as though by its own impulse, and said, "Ladies that have intelligence in love." These words I laid up in my mind with great gladness, conceiving to take them as my commencement. Wherefore, having returned to the city I spake of, and considered thereof during certain days, I began a poem with this beginning, constructed in the mode which will be seen below in its division. The poem begins here:

Ladies that have intelligence in love,
Of mine own lady I would speak with you;
Not that I hope to count her praises through,
But telling what I may, to ease my mind.
And I declare that when I speak thereof
Love sheds such perfect sweetness over me
That if my courage fail'd not, certainly
To him my listeners must be all resign'd.
Wherefore I will not speak in such large kind

That mine own speech should foil me, which were base;
But only will discourse of her high grace
In these poor words, the best that I can find,
With you alone, dear dames and damozels:
'Twere ill to speak thereof with any else.

An Angel, of his blessed knowledge, saith
To God: "Lord, in the world that Thou hast made,
A miracle in action is display'd
By reason of a soul whose splendors fare
Even hither: and since Heaven requireth
Nought saving her, for her it prayeth Thee,
Thy Saints crying aloud continually."
Yet Pity still defends our earthly share
In that sweet soul; God answering thus the prayer:
"My well-beloved, suffer that in peace
Your hope remain, while so My pleasure is,
There where one dwells who dreads the loss of her;
And who in Hell unto the doom'd shall say,
'I have look'd on that for which God's chosen pray.'"

My lady is desired in the high Heaven:
Wherefore, it now behoveth me to tell,
Saying: Let any maid that would be well
Esteem'd keep with her: for as she goes by,
Into foul hearts a deathly chill is driven
By Love, that makes ill thought to perish there;
While any who endures to gaze on her
Must either be made noble, or else die.
When one deserving to be raised so high
Is found, 'tis then her power attains its proof,
Making his heart strong for his soul's behoof
With the full strength of meek humility.
Also this virtue owns she, by God's will:
Who speaks with her can never come to ill.

Love saith concerning her: "How chanceth it
That flesh, which is of dust, should be thus pure?"
Then, gazing always, he makes oath: "For sure,
This is a creature of God till now unknown."

She hath that paleness of the pearl that's fit
In a fair woman, so much and not more;
She is as high as Nature's skill can soar;
Beauty is tried by her comparison.
Whatever her sweet eyes are turn'd upon,
Spirits of love do issue thence in flame,
Which through their eyes who then may look on them
Pierce to the heart's deep chamber every one.
And in her smile Love's image you may see;
Whence none can gaze upon her steadfastly.

Dear Song, I know thou wilt hold gentle speech
With many ladies, when I send thee forth:
Wherefore (being mindful that thou hadst thy birth
From Love, and art a modest, simple child),
Whomso thou meetest, say thou this to each:
"Give me good speed! To her I wend along
In whose much strength my weakness is made strong."
And if, i' the end, thou wouldst not be beguiled
Of all thy labor, seek not the defiled
And common sort; but rather choose to be
Where man and woman dwell in courtesy.
So to the road thou shalt be reconciled,
And find the lady, and with the lady, Love.
Commend thou me to each, as doth behove.

. . . . . .

When this song was a little gone abroad, a certain one of my friends, hearing the same, was pleased to question me, that I should tell him what thing love is; it may be, conceiving from the words thus heard a hope of me beyond my desert. Wherefore I, thinking that after such discourse it were well to say somewhat of the nature of Love, and also in accordance with my friend's desire, proposed to myself to write certain words in the which I should treat of this argument. And the sonnet that I then made is this:

Love and the gentle heart are one same thing,
Even as the wise man in his ditty saith.
Each, of itself, would be such life in death

As rational soul bereft of reasoning.
'Tis Nature makes them when she loves: a king
Love is, whose palace where he sojourneth
Is call'd the Heart; there draws he quiet breath
At first, with brief or longer slumbering.
Then beauty seen in virtuous womankind
Will make the eyes desire, and through the heart
Send the desiring of the eyes again;
Where often it abides so long enshrined
That Love at length out of his sleep will start.
And women feel the same for worthy men.

. . . . . .

Having treated of love in the foregoing, it appeared to me that I should also say something in praise of my lady, wherein it might be set forth how love manifested itself when produced by her; and how not only she could awaken it where it slept, but where it was not she could marvelously create it. To the which end I wrote another sonnet; and it is this:

My lady carries love within her eyes;
All that she looks on is made pleasanter;
Upon her path men turn to gaze at her;
He whom she greeteth feels his heart to rise,
And droops his troubled visage, full of sighs,
And of his evil heart is then aware:
Hate loves, and pride becomes a worshiper.
O women, help to praise her in somewise.
Humbleness, and the hope that hopeth well,
By speech of hers into the mind are brought,
And who beholds is blessed oftenwhiles.
The look she hath when she a little smiles
Cannot be said, nor holden in the thought;
'Tis such a new and gracious miracle.

. . . . . .

A few days after this, my body became afflicted with a painful infirmity, whereby I suffered bitter anguish for many days, which at last brought me unto such weakness that I could no longer move. And I remember that on the

ninth day, being overcome with intolerable pain, a thought came into my mind concerning my lady: but when it had a little nourished this thought, my mind returned to its brooding over mine enfeebled body. And then perceiving how frail a thing life is, even though health keep with it, the matter seemed to me so pitiful that I could not choose but weep; and weeping I said within myself: "Certainly it must sometime come to pass that the very gentle Beatrice will die." Then, feeling bewildered, I closed mine eyes; and my brain began to be in travail as the brain of one frantic, and to have such imaginations as here follow.

And at the first, it seemed to me that I saw certain faces of women with their hair loosened, which called out to me, "Thou shalt surely die;" after the which, other terrible and unknown appearances said unto me, "Thou art dead." At length, as my phantasy held on in its wanderings, I came to be I knew not where, and to behold a throng of disheveled ladies wonderfully sad, who kept going hither and thither weeping. Then the sun went out, so that the stars showed themselves and they were of such a color that I knew they must be weeping; and it seemed to me that the birds fell dead out of the sky, and that there were great earthquakes. With that, while I wondered in my trance, and was filled with a grievous fear, I conceived that a certain friend came unto me and said: "Hast thou not heard? She that was thine excellent lady hath been taken out of life." Then I began to weep very piteously; and not only in mine imagination, but with mine eyes, which were wet with tears. And I seemed to look towards Heaven, and to behold a multitude of angels who were returning upwards, having before them an exceedingly white cloud: and these angels were singing together gloriously, and the words of their song were these: *"Osanna in excelsis:"* and there was no more that I heard. Then my heart that was so full of love said unto me: "It is true that our lady lieth dead:" and it seemed to me that I went to look upon the body wherein that blessed and most noble spirit had had

its abiding-place. And so strong was this idle imagining, that it made me to behold my lady in death; whose head certain ladies seemed to be covering with a white veil; and who was so humble of her aspect that it was as though she had said, "I have attained to look on the beginning of peace." And therewithal I came unto such humility by the sight of her, that I cried out upon Death, saying: "Now come unto me, and be not bitter against me any longer: surely, there where thou hast been, thou hast learned gentleness. Wherefore come now unto me who do greatly desire thee: seest thou not that I wear thy color already?" And when I had seen all those offices performed that are fitting to be done unto the dead, it seemed to me that I went back unto mine own chamber, and looked up towards heaven. And so strong was my phantasy, that I wept again in very truth, and said with my true voice: "O excellent soul! how blessed is he that now looketh upon thee!"

And as I said these words, with a painful anguish of sobbing and another prayer unto Death, a young and gentle lady, who had been standing beside me where I lay, conceiving that I wept and cried out because of the pain of mine infirmity, was taken with trembling and began to shed tears. Whereby other ladies, who were about the room, becoming aware of my discomfort by reason of the moan that she made (who indeed was of my very near kindred), led her away from where I was, and then set themselves to awaken me, thinking that I dreamed, and saying: "Sleep no longer, and be not disquieted."

Then, by their words, this strong imagination was brought suddenly to an end, at the moment that I was about to say, "O Beatrice! peace be with thee." And already I had said, "O Beatrice!" when, being aroused, I opened mine eyes, and knew that it had been a deception. But albeit I had indeed uttered her name, yet my voice was so broken with sobs, that it was not understood by these ladies; so that in spite of the sore shame that I felt, I turned towards them by Love's counseling. And

when they beheld me, they began to say, "He seemeth as one dead," and to whisper among themselves, "Let us strive if we may not comfort him." Whereupon they spake to me many soothing words, and questioned me moreover touching the cause of my fear. Then I, being somewhat reassured, and having perceived that it was a mere phantasy, said unto them, "This thing it was that made me afeard;" and told them of all that I had seen, from the beginning even unto the end, but without once speaking the name of my lady. Also, after I had recovered from my sickness, I bethought me to write these things in rhyme; deeming it a lovely thing to be known. Whereof I wrote this poem:

A very pitiful lady, very young,
Exceeding rich in human sympathies,
Stood by, what time I clamor'd upon Death;
And at the wild words wandering on my tongue
And at the piteous look within mine eyes
She was affrighted, that sobs choked her breath.
So by her weeping where I lay beneath,
Some other gentle ladies came to know
My state, and made her go:
Afterwards, bending themselves over me,
One said, "Awaken thee!"
And one, "What thing thy sleep disquieteth?"
With that, my soul woke up from its eclipse,
The while my lady's name rose to my lips:

But utter'd in a voice so sob-broken,
So feeble with the agony of tears,
That I alone might hear it in my heart;
And though that look was on my visage then
Which he who is ashamed as plainly wears,
Love made that I through shame held not apart,
But gazed upon them. And my hue was such
That they look'd at each other and thought of death;
Saying under their breath
Most tenderly, "Oh, let us comfort him:"

Then unto me: "What dream
Was thine, that it hath shaken thee so much?"
And when I was a little comforted,
"This, ladies, was the dream I dreamt," I said.

"I was a-thinking how life fails with us
Suddenly after such a little while;
When Love sobb'd in my heart, which is his home.
Whereby my spirit wax'd so dolorous
That in myself I said, with sick recoil:
'Yea, to my lady too this Death must come.'
And therewithal such a bewilderment
Possess'd me, that I shut mine eyes for peace;
And in my brain did cease
Order of thought, and every healthful thing.
Afterwards, wandering
Amid a swarm of doubts that came and went,
Some certain women's faces hurried by,
And shriek'd to me, 'Thou too shalt die, shalt die!'

"Then saw I many broken hinted sights
In the uncertain state I stepp'd into.
Meseem'd to be I know not in what place,
Where ladies through the street, like mournful lights,
Ran with loose hair, and eyes that frighten'd you
By their own terror, and a pale amaze:
The while, little by little, as I thought,
The sun ceased, and the stars began to gather,
And each wept at the other;
And birds dropp'd in mid-flight out of the sky;
And earth shook suddenly;
And I was 'ware of one, hoarse and tired out,
Who ask'd of me: 'Hast thou not heard it said? . . .
Thy lady, she that was so fair, is dead.'

"Then lifting up mine eyes, as the tears came,
I saw the Angels, like a rain of manna,
In a long flight flying back Heavenward;
Having a little cloud in front of them,

After the which they went and said, 'Hosanna!'
And if they had said more, you should have heard.
Then Love spoke thus: 'Now all shall be made clear:
Come and behold our lady where she lies.'
These idle phantasies
Then carried me to see my lady dead:
And standing at her head
Her ladies put a white veil over her;
And with her was such very humbleness
That she appeared to say, 'I am at peace.'

"And I became so humble in my grief,
Seeing in her such deep humility,
That I said: 'Death, I hold thee passing good
Henceforth, and a most gentle sweet relief,
Since my dear love has chosen to dwell with thee:
Pity, not hate, is thine, well understood.
Lo! I do so desire to see thy face
That I am like as one who nears the tomb;
My soul entreats thee, Come.'
Then I departed, having made my moan;
And when I was alone
I said, and cast my eyes to the High Place:
'Blessed is he, fair soul, who meets thy glance!'
. . . Just then you woke me, of your complaisaunce."

. . . . . .

The eyes that weep for pity of the heart
Have wept so long that their grief languisheth
And they have no more tears to weep withal:
And now, if I would ease me of a part
Of what, little by little, leads to death,
It must be done by speech, or not at all.
And because often, thinking, I recall
How it was pleasant, ere she went afar,
To talk of her with you, kind damozels,
I talk with no one else,
But only with such hearts as women's are.
And I will say,—still sobbing as speech fails,—
That she hath gone to Heaven suddenly,
And hath left Love below, to mourn with me.

Beatrice is gone up into high Heaven,
The kingdom where the angels are at peace;
And lives with them; and to her friends is dead.
Not by the frost of winter was she driven
Away, like others; nor by summer-heats;
But through a perfect gentleness, instead.
For from the lamp of her meek lowlihead
Such an exceeding glory went up hence
That it woke wonder in the Eternal Sire,
Until a sweet desire
Enter'd Him for that lovely excellence,
So that He bade her to Himself aspire:
Counting this weary and most evil place
Unworthy of a thing so full of grace.

Wonderfully out of the beautiful form
Soar'd her clear spirit, waxing glad the while;
And is in its first home, there where it is.
Who speaks thereof, and feels not the tears warm
Upon his face, must have become so vile
As to be dead to all sweet sympathies.
Out upon him! an abject wretch like this
May not imagine anything of her—
He needs no bitter tears for his relief.
But sighing comes, and grief,
And the desire to find no comforter
(Save only Death, who makes all sorrow brief),
To him who for a while turns in his thought
How she hath been among us, and is not.

With sighs my bosom always laboreth
On thinking, as I do continually,
Of her for whom my heart now breaks apace;
And very often when I think of death,
Such a great inward longing comes to me
That it will change the color of my face;
And, if the idea settles in its place,
All my limbs shake as with an ague-fit;
Till, starting up in wild bewilderment,
I do become so shent

DANTE AND BEATRICE

That I go forth, lest folk misdoubt of it.
Afterward, calling with a sore lament
On Beatrice, I ask, "Canst thou be dead?"
And calling on her, I am comforted.

Grief with its tears, and anguish with its sighs,
Come to me now whene'er I am alone;
So that I think the sight of me gives pain.
And what my life hath been, that living dies,
Since for my lady the New Birth's begun,
I have not any language to explain.
And so, dear ladies, though my heart were fain,
I scarce could tell indeed how I am thus.
All joy is with my bitter life at war;
Yea, I am fallen so far
That all men seem to say, "Go out from us,"
Eyeing my cold white lips, how dead they are.
But she, though I be bow'd unto the dust,
Watches me; and will guerdon me, I trust.

Weep, piteous Song of mine, upon thy way,
To the dames going, and the damozels,
For whom, and for none else,
Thy sisters have made music many a day.
Thou, that art very sad and not as they,
Go dwell thou with them as a mourner dwells.

After I had written this poem, I received the visit of a friend whom I counted as second unto me in the degrees of friendship, and who, moreover, had been united by the nearest kindred to that most gracious creature. And when we had a little spoken together, he began to solicit me that I would write somewhat in memory of a lady who had died; and he disguised his speech, so as to seem to be speaking of another who was but lately dead: wherefore I, preceiving that his speech was of none other than that blessed one herself, told him that it should be done as he required. Then afterwards, having thought thereof, I imagined to give vent in a sonnet to some part of my hidden lamentations: but in such sort that it might seem

to be spoken by this friend of mine, to whom I was to give it. And the sonnet saith thus: "Stay now with me," etc.

This sonnet has two parts. In the first, I call the Faithful of Love to hear me. In the second, I relate my miserable condition. The second begins here, "Mark how they force."

Stay now with me, and listen to my sighs,
Ye piteous hearts, as pity bids ye do.
Mark how they force their way out and press through:
If they be once pent up, the whole life dies.
Seeing that now indeed my weary eyes
Oftener refuse than I can tell to you
(Even though my endless grief is ever new),
To weep, and let the smother'd anguish rise.
Also in sighing ye shall hear me call
On her whose blessed presence doth enrich
The only home that well befitteth her:
And ye shall hear a bitter scorn of all
Sent from the inmost of my spirit in speech
That mourns its joy and its joy's minister.

But when I had written this sonnet, bethinking me who he was to whom I was to give it, that it might appear to be his speech, it seemed to me that this was but a poor and barren gift for one of her so near kindred. Wherefore, before giving him this sonnet, I wrote two stanzas of a poem: the first being written in very sooth as though it were spoken by him, but the other being mine own speech, albeit, unto one who should not look closely, they would both seem to be said by the same person. Nevertheless, looking closely, one must perceive that it is not so, inasmuch as one does not call this most gracious creature *his lady,* and the other does, as is manifestly apparent. And I gave the poem and the sonnet unto my friend, saying that I had made them only for him.

The poem begins, "Whatever while," and has two parts. In the first, that is, in the first stanza, this my

dear friend, her kinsman, laments. In the second, I lament; that is, in the other stanza, which begins, "For ever." And thus it appears that in this poem two persons lament, of whom one laments as a brother, the other as a servant.

Whatever while the thought comes over me
That I may not again
Behold that lady whom I mourn for now,
About my heart my mind brings constantly
So much of extreme pain
That I say, Soul of mine, why stayest thou?
Truly the anguish, soul, that we must bow
Beneath, until we win out of this life,
Gives me full oft a fear that trembleth:
So that I call on Death
Even as on Sleep one calleth after strife,
Saying, Come unto me. Life showeth grim
And bare; and if one dies, I envy him.

For ever, among all my sighs which burn,
There is a piteous speech
That clamors upon death continually:
Yea, unto him doth my whole spirit turn
Since first his hand did reach
My lady's life with most foul cruelty.
But from the height of woman's fairness, she,
Going up from us with the joy we had,
Grew perfectly and spiritually fair;
That so she spreads even there
A light of Love which makes the Angels glad,
And even unto their subtle minds can bring
A certain awe of profound marveling.

. . . . . .

A gentle thought there is will often start,
Within my secret self, to speech of thee;
Also of Love it speaks so tenderly
That much in me consents and takes its part.
"And what is this," the soul saith to the heart,

"That cometh thus to comfort thee and me,
And thence where it would dwell, thus potently
Can drive all other thoughts by its strange art?"
And the heart answers: "Be no more at strife
'Twixt doubt and doubt: this is Love's messenger
And speaketh but his words, from him received;
And all the strength it owns and all the life
It draweth from the gentle eyes of her
Who, looking on our grief, hath often grieved."

. . . . . .

Beyond the sphere which spreads to widest space
Now soars the sigh that my heart sends above:
A new perception born of grieving Love
Guideth it upward the untrodden ways.
When it hath reach'd unto the end, and stays,
It sees a lady round whom splendors move
In homage; till, by the great light thereof
Abash'd, the pilgrim spirit stands at gaze.
It sees her such, that when it tells me this
Which it hath seen, I understand it not,
It hath a speech so subtile and so fine.
And yet I know its voice within my thought
Often remembereth me of Beatrice:
So that I understand it, ladies mine.

After writing this sonnet, it was given unto me to behold a very wonderful vision; wherein I saw things which determined me that I would say nothing further of this most blessed one, until such time as I could discourse more worthily concerning her. And to this end I labor all I can; as she well knoweth. Wherefore if it be His pleasure through whom is the life of all things, that my life continue with me a few years, it is my hope that I shall yet write concerning her what hath not before been written of any woman. After the which, may it seem good unto Him who is the Master of Grace, that my spirit should go hence to behold the glory of its lady: to wit, of that blessed Beatrice who now gazeth continually on His countenance who is blessed throughout all ages.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST PERIOD (CONTINUED)
1100–1475
THE "DIVINA COMMEDIA"

THE GREAT EPIC. Great as is the *Vita Nuova* in its way, it never can rank with the epic which now bears the curious name *The Divine Comedy*. "The Comedy of Dante Alighieri, a Florentine by nation but not by habits," the poet himself named it—*comedy* because of the *style* of writing, not because of its "happy ending;" for whatever may be said, it is still the saddest poem in the world. For the epithet *Divine* Dante is not responsible; that word first appears in the title in an edition of the *Comedy* published in 1555.

The *Divine Comedy* is a long poem of original metrical structure. The lines are ar-

ranged in threes, with the first and third rhyming; then, in the next *terzine,* or *terzette,* the first and third lines rhyme with the second of the preceding terzette, forming continuously what is known as the *terza rima.* To close the canto is used a single line, or *tornello,* rhyming with the second line preceding it, that is, with the middle line of the preceding terzette. The last seven lines of the third canto, whose literal translation follows them, will illustrate the scheme:

Finito questo, la buia campagna
Tremo si forte, che dello spavento
La mente di sudore ancor mi bagna.
La terra lagrimosa diede vento,
E baleno d' una luce vermiglia,
La qual mi vinse ciascun sentimento;
E caddi, come l' unom, cui sonno piglia.

When he had ended, the dusky champaign trembled so violently, that the remembrance of my terror bathes me still with sweat. The tearful ground gave out wind, and flashed with a crimson light, which conquered all my senses: and I fell, like one who is seized with sleep.

There are three grand divisions, *cantiche,* in the epic: the *Inferno,* divided into thirty-four cantos; the *Purgatorio,* into thirty-three cantos, and the *Paradiso,* into thirty-three, thus making the even hundred in all.

Shelley says: "Dante was the second epic poet, that is, the second poet the series of whose creations bore a defined and intelligible relation to the knowledge and sentiment and religion in which he lived. Milton was the third."

That the *Divine Comedy* is one of the greatest monuments of human genius, that only the epics of Homer and Milton can be compared with it, that it is scarcely in the range of human possibility to equal it, are commonplaces of literary criticism which we may accept without discussion or fear of successful contradiction. What remains now is to endeavor to understand the vast work, and to do it we must have at the beginning some information of the nature of the epic and its unique content.

II. Preliminary Notions. In the first place, the student of Dante must know something of the history of the period in which he lived, for the poem includes many allusions that we should recognize, besides an infinity of them that we can never expect to know. Then, Dante tells the tale as though he was writing in the year 1300, which gives him an opportunity to write of events prior to that time as though past, but of what occurred between 1300 and the actual date of writing, as though in prophecy.

The poem is dual in its nature; it is a vision of the world beyond the grave, and also an allegory of the life and destiny of man, his need of light and guidance, his duties to the temporal and spiritual powers, to the Empire and the Church. The aim of the poem is to induce men to leave their state of misery and to lead them to happiness. In this allegory, which has with some degree of propriety been called "the *Pilgrim's Progress* of the Italians," Dante is the Pilgrim journeying

through the several stages of existence, gaining at last a glimpse of the Divine; his two guides are Vergil, Human Wisdom, and Beatrice, Heavenly Wisdom.

That Dante is bitter, vindictive and cruel in many of his allegations is true, for he takes the opportunity to vent his spleen and express his personal hatred of individuals again and again. Without a quiver he places his enemies in the extremest tortures of hell, and seems to gloat over their appalling sufferings. Foscolo, a critic of Dante whose admiration for the poet is unbounded, mentions the following illustrations of his vindictiveness, for Dante has said:

The people of Siena are a parcel of coxcombs; those of Arezzo, dogs; and of Casentino, hogs. Lucca made a trade of perjury. Pistoia was a den of beasts, and ought to be reduced to ashes; and the river Arno should overflow and drown every soul in Pisa. Almost all the women in Florence walked half-naked in public, and were abandoned in private. Every brother, husband, son, and father in Bologna set their women to sale. In all Lombardy were not to be found three men who were not rascals; and in Genoa and Romagna people went about pretending to be men, but in reality were bodies inhabited by devils, their souls having gone to the "lowest pit of hell" to join the betrayers of their friends and kinsmen.

So much for his beloved countrymen. As for foreigners, particularly kings, "Edward the First of England, and Robert of Scotland, were a couple of grasping fools; the Emperor Albert was an usurper; Alphonso the Second, of Spain, a debauchee; the King of Bohemia a coward; Frederick of Arragon a coward and miser; the Kings of Portugal and Norway forgers; the King of Naples a man whose virtues were expressed by a unit, and his vices by a million; and the King of France, the

descendant of a Paris butcher, and of progenitors who poisoned St. Thomas Aquinas, their descendants conquering with the arms of Judas rather than of soldiers, and selling the flesh of their daughters to old men in order to extricate themselves from a danger."

From which we are bound to conclude, with Leigh Hunt:

He was an earnest and suffering man and a great genius; but his fame must ever continue to lie where his greatest blame does, in his principal work. He was a gratuitous logician, a preposterous politician, a cruel theologian; but his wonderful imagination, and (considering the bitterness that was in him) still more wonderful sweetness, have gone into the hearts of his fellow-creatures, and will remain there in spite of the moral and religious absurdities with which they are mingled, and of the inability which the best natured readers feel to associate his entire memory, as a poet, with their usual personal delight in a poet and his name.

III. Dante's Universe. To understand the progress of events in Dante's great epic, some knowledge of the geography of his universe is necessary, and as it is difficult to pick it out from his descriptions of the various parts of the poem, a brief summary will be found helpful. The center of his universe is the center of gravity of the earth, to which, in the *Divine Comedy,* we descend through the Pit of Hell, thence through the earth's substance to the opposite side, where we emerge on the single island which lies centered in the vast ocean, climb the Mountain of Purgatory, which lies within the Spheres of Air and Fire, until we reach the Terrestrial Paradise, from the sum-

mit of which we ascend through the Nine Heavens to the all-containing spaceless Empyrean.

Our globe contains two elemental hemispheres—the Eastern, the inhabited, composed chiefly of land, and the Western, almost wholly of water. In the center of the Eastern hemisphere is Jerusalem, exactly under which, at the central and lowest point of the land hemisphere, is Hell. In the midst of the uninhabited water hemisphere on the other side is Purgatory, the antipodes of Jerusalem. Beyond Purgatory lie the Nine Heavens, each a hollow revolving sphere concentrically moving.

Imagine a vast pit reaching from the surface of the earth down to the center and divided into nine circles, gradually diminishing in circumference. Within the Gate of Hell but before the commencement of the circles, is the dark valley known as Limbo, into which are thrown those worthless wretches who are scorned by both Heaven and Hell. The nine circles are appropriated each to the punishment of certain particular offenses, and some of the circles are divided to accommodate the different species of the same generic crimes. The more heinous the crime, the deeper and smaller is the circle in which the perpetrator is punished, until at the very bottom, or center of the earth, the arch-traitor Lucifer is fixed. Leaving the lowest Hell and proceeding to the opposite surface of the earth, in the center of the sea the pilgrim finds the mountain of Pur-

gatory, which rises in spirals over a heavy foundation, and then over seven successive terraces to the Terrestrial Paradise. This elevated cone, the only land in the great water hemisphere, truncated at the top, projects into the ethereal spheres. On the winding spiral are found those tardy penitents who delayed in securing their salvation on earth or who were negligent in some of the duties of the Church. At the termination of the winding terrace the Gate of St. Peter bars or gives access to Purgatory proper, and thus ultimately to Paradise. The approach to the gate is by three steps, the first of polished white marble, the second of inky purple stone, rough and crackled, the third of flaming blood-red porphyry. On this rest the feet of the dazzling angel in ashen garb who holds the golden and silvery keys that open the great gate and protects them by a drawn and flaming sword. The seven terraces on the inside of the gate are not spirals, but encircling, into which successive entrances are made by means of stairs cut in the rock. Upon each terrace occurs the purgation from one of the seven capital sins. Having passed the seventh terrace, the pilgrim finds himself within the Terrestrial Paradise and ready to enter the Celestial.

Each successive sphere of the Nine Heavens is nobler and grander than the one preceding. The First Heaven, revolved by the Angels, is that of the waxing and waning of the moon, where dwell those Imperfect through Insta-

bility; the Second Heaven, revolved by the Archangels, is that of Mercury, the abode of wills imperfect through love of fame; the Third Heaven, revolved by the Principalities, the last reached by the shadow of the world, is the dwelling of wills imperfect through human love; the Middle Heaven is that of the Sun, the home of great spiritual and intellectual souls; the Fifth, the abode of Martyrs, Confessors and Warriors for the faith; the Sixth, the home of Just Rulers; the Seventh, the dwelling of the Saintly Monks and Hermits whose lives were refined by asceticism; the Eighth, the Starry Heaven, revolved by the Cherubim, the residence of the Apostles and the saints of the Old and New Testaments; the Starless Crystalline, or Ninth Heaven, revolved by the Seraphim, where circle in fiery rings around the light which no man can approach, the Nine Orders of Celestial Hierarchy; lastly the Empyrean, beyond the limits of Time and Space, where the Elect have their home in the mystical White Rose, that ineffable Flower whose central Yellow is the sun itself and whose countless petals are the enthroned Souls of the Elect whose eyes are all set toward the God Triune. Above and beyond the Rose what can there be? Naught save the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End: The Ever Blessed Trinity in Unity, God Himself.

IV. The "Inferno." The terrible cantos of the *Inferno* lay bare the soul of Dante, when,

From Engraving by Doré

"THE RADIANT PLANET, THAT TO LOVE INVITES,
MADE ALL THE ORIENT LAUGH, AND VEILED BENEATH
THE PISCES' LIGHT, THAT IN HIS ESCORT CAME."

—*Purgatorio, Canto I, 19-21*

during the early part of his exile, he was in a perfect hell of pain, anger and hatred—

> In the midway of our life below,
> I found myself in a gloomy wood,—
> No traces left the path direct to show.

This would mean that in the year 1300, when Dante was about thirty-five, he assumes that he wandered at night into this forest of rough and robust growth, lost his way, and just at daybreak reached a mountain foot, trembling with fear and a horror so great that even the passage of death could be no more bitter. Climbing the hill, he was met by a leopard bounding in front of him; by a lion with head aloft, mad with hunger, frightening the very air; and after them by a she-wolf, leaner and more eager than the others, barring his progress. Back toward the darkness of the wood where the sun ne'er spoke a word, he fled with the wolf close upon him.

> While I was crushing down to the low place,
> To me was offered one before mine eyes
> Who seemed by reason of long silence hoarse.
> In the great desert him when I beheld
> "Have pity upon me!" I cried to him,
> "Who that thou be, or Shade, or certain man."
>
> He answered me: "Not man: man once I was;
> Also my parents were Lombardians,
> Mantuans as to country both the two.
> *Sub Fulio* was I born, although 'twere late,
> And under good Augustus lived in Rome,
> In the time of the false and lying gods.

I was a poet, and I sang that just
Son of Anchises who did come from Troy,
After that haughty Ilion had been burned.
But why to such annoy returnest thou?
Wherefore not scale the delectable mount
Which of all joy is cause and principle?"

"Art thou that Vergil, then, that fountain-head
Which spreads abroad so wide a stream of speech?"
Replied I to him with a brow ashamed.
"O of the other poets honor and light,
Avail me the long study and great love
Which have impelled me search thy volume through!
My master thou, and thou mine author art:
Thou only art the one from whom I took
The noble style which won me honoring.
Behold the beast because of which I turned:
Do thou against her help me, famous sage,
Because she makes me tremble, veins and pulse.

"Thee it behoves to hold another course,"
He answered, after that he saw me weep,
"If thou would'st get from out this savage place.
. . . . . .
Whence I, for thy more good, think and discern
Thou follow me: and I will be thy guide,
And bring thee hence by an eternal place;
Where thou shalt hearken the despairing shrieks,
Shalt see the ancient Spirits dolorous,
That each one outcries for the second death.
And thou shalt then see those who are content
Within the fire, because they hope to come,
When that it be, unto the blessed race.
To whom thereafter if thou wouldst ascend,
A Soul there'll be more worthy this than I:
Thee will I leave with her, when I depart:
Seeing that Emperor Who above there rules,
Because I was rebellious to His law,
Wills to His city no access by me.

In every part He sways, and there He reigns:
There is His city, and the exalted seat.
Oh, happy he whom thither He elects!"

And I to him: "Poet, I crave of thee,
And by that God of Whom thou knewest not,
That I may flee this evil so, and worse,
That thou do take me whither now thou saidst,
So that I may behold Saint Peter's gate,
And those whom thou dost make so sorrowful."

Then on he moved, and I kept after him.
—*Translation of W. M. Rossetti.*

Doubting whether his strength sufficed for the terrible journey through Hell, an enterprise accomplished by Aeneas and St. Paul only, Dante expressed his fear to Vergil, who assured the timorous poet that Beatrice enjoined the expedition and had sent Vergil to conduct her lover on his perilous way:

As flow'rets, bent and closed by chilling night,
Soon as the sun his radiance hath bestowed,
Rise on their stems, and opening hail the light;
Thus to my wearied breast fresh vigor ran;
And o'er my heart such goodly courage flowed,
Like one restored to freedom, I began:
"O how compassionate the heavenly Maid
Who lent me succor! and thyself how kind,
Who hast so soon her words of truth obeyed!
Such strong desire my journey to pursue
Thy cheering speech hath kindled in my mind,
That I with joy my first design renew.
Lead on;—one impulse doth our bosoms sway;
Thou art my guide—my master—and my lord."
I spake;—and soon as he resumed the way,
That deep and savage pathway I explored.
—*Wright's Translation.*

Following his guide, Dante came to the gate of Hell, over which he read the terrible inscription:

"Through me you pass into the city of woe:
Through me you pass into eternal pain:
Through me among the people lost for aye.
Justice the founder of my fabric moved:
To rear me was the task of power divine,
Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.
Before me things create were none, save things
Eternal, and eternal I endure.
All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

—*Cary's Translation.*

Entering the gate, the travelers found themselves where dwell the souls who had been indifferent alike to good and evil:

Forthwith
I understood, for certain, this the tribe
Of those ill spirits both to God displeasing
And to his foes. These wretches, who ne'er lived,
Went on in nakedness, and sorely stung
By wasps and hornets, which bedew'd their cheeks
With blood, that, mix'd with tears, dropp'd to their feet,
And by disgustful worms was gather'd there.

—*Cary's Translation.*

Pursuing their way, they reached Acheron, that mournful river old, where they were met by Charon, whose opposition was overcome by the formula which Vergil mutters more than once to open gates or quell the spirits who oppose them:

"Thus it is willed where will and power are joined;
Therefore submit, nor question us again."

The dark lake's pilot heard;—and at the sound
Fell instant his rough cheeks, while flashing ranged
His angry eyes in flaming circles round.
But they—soon as these threatenings met their ear—
Poor, naked, weary souls—their color changed;
And their teeth chattered through excess of fear.
God they blasphemed, their parents, man's whole race,
The hour, the spot,—and e'en the very seed
To which their miserable life they trace.
Then, while full bitterly their sorrows flowed,
They gathered to that evil strand, decreed
To all who live not in the fear of God.
Charon, the fiend, with eyes of living coal,
Beckoning the mournful troop, collects them there,
And with his oar strikes each reluctant soul.
As leaves in autumn, borne before the wind,
Drop one by one, until the branch, laid bare,
Sees all its honors to the earth consigned:
So from that coast, at his dread signal, all
The guilty race of Adam downward pour,—
Each, as a falcon, answering to the call.
Thus pass they slowly o'er the water brown;
And ere they land on the opposing shore,
Fresh numbers from this bank come crowding down.
"All those, my son," exclaimed the courteous guide,
"Who in the wrath of the Almighty die,
Are gathered here from every region wide:
Goaded by heavenly Justice in its ire,
To pass the stream they rush thus hastily;
So that their fear is turned into desire.
By virtuous soul this wave is never crossed;
Wherefore, if Charon warn thee to depart,
The meaning of his words will not be lost."
This converse closed—the dusky region dread
Trembled so awfully, that o'er my heart
Doth terror still a chilly moisture shed.
Sent forth a blast that melancholy realm,
Which flashing a vermilion light around,
At once did all my senses overwhelm;

240

And down I sank, like one in slumber bound.

—*Wright's Translation.*

A crash of thunder through the poet's brain awakened him, and he found himself on the brink of a great gulf, from the blackness of which arose a thunderous sound of innumerable groanings. Surrounding this appalling abyss was the first circle of Hell, Limbo, where dwell the virtuous ones who need not suffer for their sins, but who, through lack of baptism, cannot enter Paradise; Adam, Noah, Moses, Abraham and many, many more, spirits thick as leaves; Homer advancing with sword in hand, the poet's sovereign; Horace, the satirist; Ovid, Lucan, all are met:

When they together short discourse had held,
They turn'd to me, with salutation kind
Beckoning me; at the which my master smiled:
Nor was this all; but greater honor still
They gave me, for they made me of their tribe;
And I was sixth amid so learn'd a band.

From a more elevated station Dante then saw the great spirits whose sight exalted him: Electra; Aeneas; Caesar in armor, with his hawk's eyes; Brutus; Lucretia; Julia, the mother of the Gracchi; and, apart by himself, the Sultan Saladin; above a little, Aristotle and his family of great philosophers; Cicero and the moral Seneca, and scores of others.

At the entrance of the second circle stands Minos gnarling, who passes sentence on every one and indicates the circle to which each is

consigned, by the number of times he encircled himself with his tail:

I understood, that to this torment sad
The carnal sinners are condemn'd, in whom
Reason by lust is sway'd. As in large troops
And multitudinous, when winter reigns,
The starlings on their wings are borne abroad;
So bears the tyrannous gust those evil souls.
On this side and on that, above, below,
It drives them: hope of rest to solace them
Is none, nor e'en of milder pang. As cranes,
Chanting their dolorous notes, traverse the sky,
Stretch'd out in long array; so I beheld
Spirits, who came loud wailing, hurried on
By their dire doom.

Semiramis, Cleopatra and Helen led the van; then Dante observed two spirits and learned the story of Francesca of Rimini, who, married to Lanciotte, the brave but deformed Lord of Rimini, gives her soul to his graceful brother Paolo. The following is considered the finest passage in the *Inferno:*

"Fain would I speak, O gracious bard," I cried,
"With those two shades together flitting there,
Who seem before the wind so light to glide."
He answered me: "When they approach this way,
Invoke them by that love which brings them here,
And they will speedily thy call obey."
Soon as the hurricane had brought them nigh,
I raise my voice: "Come, O ye souls distrest,
And speak with us, unless High power deny."
As doves, by strong affection urged, repair
With firm expanded wings to their sweet nest,
Borne by the impulse of their will through air;
E'en thus from Dido's band these two were seen

Approaching lightly through that region drear;
So urgent the impassioned cry had been.
"O thou benign, compassionate, and good,
That wendest through the lurid atmosphere,
To visit us who stained the earth with blood,
Were He who rules the universe our friend,
We should implore him to give peace to thee,
Since thou hast pity for our hapless end.
Whether to hear or speak, make known thy will—
And we will hear or speak accordingly,
While, e'en as now, the cutting wind is still.
My native place is seated on the coast,
Where Po rolls down his waters to the sea,
To blend in peace his tributary host.
Love, that in noble heart is quickly caught,
Enamor'd *him* of that fair form—from me
So rudely torn,—there's anguish in the thought.
Love, that permits no loved one not to love,
Me so enthralled with thought of pleasing him,
That, as thou see'st, its influence still I prove.
Love caused us both to share one common tomb:
Hell's lowest depth—Caina, dark and dim—
Awaits our murderer:" thus she told their doom.
Soon as I heard their tale, my head I bent;
Nor from the ground my drooping eyes retire,
Till cried the bard: "On what art thou intent?"
When I could answer him, "Alas!" I said,
"How sweet the thoughts—how ardent the desire
That to the mournful step these lovers led!"
Then turning round to them, these words I spake:
"Francesca, thy misfortunes fill mine eyes
With sorrowing tears—such pity they awake.
But tell me how, and by what sign confest
Did Love reveal, in that sweet time of sighs,
The doubtful passion struggling in each breast?"
Then she to me: "There is no greater woe,
Than to remember days of happiness
Amid affliction;—this thy guide doth know.
But if how love did first our hearts beguile

Thou fain wouldst hear, I will the truth confess,
As one who tells her tale, and weeps the while.—
One day, it chanced, for pastime we were reading
How Lancelot to love became a prey;
Alone we were—of danger all unheeding.
Our eyes oft met as we that tale pursued;
And from our cheeks the color died away;
But in a moment were our hearts subdued:
For when we read of him so deep in love,
Kissing at last the smile long time desired,
Then he, who from my side will ne'er remove,
My lips, all trembling, kissed:—well may I say
That book was Galeot—Galeot, he who fired
Its baneful page:—we read no more that day."
While thus one spake, such tears the other shed,
That pity all my faculties did quell;
And reft of sense, like one already dead,
As falls a lifeless body, down I fell.

—*Wright's Translation.*

On his recovery, Dante found that he had been transferred into the third circle, which, with its guardian, is described as follows:

In the third circle I arrive, of showers
Ceaseless, accursed, heavy and cold, unchanged
For ever, both in kind and in degree.
Large hail, discolored water, sleety flaw
Through the dun midnight air stream'd down amain:
Stank all the land whereon that tempest fell.
Cerberus, cruel monster, fierce and strange,
Through his wide threefold throat, barks as a dog
Over the multitude immersed beneath.
His eyes glare crimson, black his unctuous beard,
His belly large, and claw'd the hands, with which
He tears the spirits, flays them, and their limbs
Piecemeal disparts. Howling there spread, as curs,
Under the rainy deluge, with one side
The other screening, oft they roll them round,

A wretched, godless crew. When that great worm
Descried us, savage Cerberus, he oped
His jaws, and the fangs show'd us; not a limb
Of him but trembled. Then my guide, his palms
Expanding on the ground, thence fill'd with earth
Raised them, and cast it in his ravenous maw.
E'en as a dog, that yelling bays for food
His keeper, when the morsel comes, lets fall
His fury, bent alone with eager haste
To swallow it; so dropp'd the loathsome cheeks
Of demon Cerberus, who thundering stuns
The spirits, that they for deafness wish in vain.
We, o'er the shades thrown prostrate by the brunt
Of the heavy tempest passing, set our feet
Upon their emptiness, that substance seem'd.
—*Cary's Translation.*

This is the circle of the Gluttons, over whom pilgrims passed as though they had been a pavement to walk upon. One of them rose and foretold to Dante the troubles which were to come to Florence; and then the poets found their way into the fourth circle, where Plutus is stationed as a guardian over the prodigal and the avaricious, who spend their hours in direful conflicts, rolling huge stones against each other with mutual upbraidings. Next, in the fifth circle, they found the Wrathful and Gloomy, tormented in a filthy marsh full of dirty, naked bodies that in everlasting rage tore one another to pieces. In quieter places could be seen bubbles rising through the black waters, and these were the stifling words of the Sullen rising from the slimy bottom: "We were sad and dark within us in the midst of the sweet sunshine, and now we live sadly in these

mirky bogs." Walking along the border of the loathsome pool, they reached a tower, in response to a signal from which Phlegyas, the ferryman, crossed the lake and conveyed Vergil and Dante to the other side, where they arrived at the city of Dis, whose portals were closed against them by many demons. Nevertheless, after having seen the hellish furies and the monsters surrounding, an angel opened the city gates, and Dante found it to be the place where heretics are burned in tombs filled with intense fire. Dante and his guide walked around among these flaming sepulchers as in a cemetery, and from their coverless depths heard the plaints of the prisoners, among whom Dante recognized the father of his good friend and fellow poet, Guido Cavalcanti. In a valley whose loathsome odor made them pause for a while, they found the Minotaur gnawing himself for rage, and as they advanced, plunging like a bull stricken by the knife of a butcher. Escaping him, they descended a fissure and came upon a river of boiling blood, besides which ran thousands of centaurs armed with bows and arrows. In the torrent were the souls of those who had inflicted violence while alive, and if now at any time one of them rose higher than he had a right to do, the centaurs thrust him back with savage cries.

Space forbids us to continue the story of Dante's progress in such detail, nor is it worth our while to fill our minds with the horrors the

poem describes. By means of the extracts which follow, however, the course of the travels can be traced and a comprehension gained of the spirit that animates the whole. The following are all taken from Cary's translation, which, though sometimes criticized, seems best to have caught the spirit of Dante.

The great Ruskin said: "If no poet ever was liable to lose more in translation, none was ever so carefully translated, and I hardly know whether most to admire the rigid fidelity or the sweet and solemn harmony of Cary's verse."

Dante found those who have done violence to their own persons and wrote their story:

Ere Nessus yet had reach'd the other bank,
We enter'd on a forest, where no track
Of steps had worn a way. Not verdant there
The foliage, but of dusky hue; not light
The boughs and tapering, but with knares deform'd
And matted thick: fruits there were none, but thorns
Instead, with venom fill'd. Less sharp than these,
Less intricate the brakes, wherein abide
Those animals, that hate the cultured fields,
Betwixt Corneto and Cecina's stream.
Here the brute Harpies make their nest, the same
Who from the Strophades the Trojan band
Drove with dire boding of their future woe.
Broad are their pennons, of the human form
Their neck and countenance, arm'd with talons keen
The feet, and the huge belly fledged with wings.
These sit and wail on the drear mystic wood.
The kind instructor in these words began:
"Ere further thou proceed, know thou art now
I' th' second round, and shalt be, till thou come
Upon the horrid sand: look therefore well
Around thee, and such things thou shalt behold,

As would my speech discredit." On all sides
I heard sad plainings breathe, and none could see
From whom they might have issued. In amaze
Fast bound I stood. He, as it seem'd, believed
That I had thought so many voices came
From some amid those thickets close conceal'd,
And thus his speech resumed: "If thou lop off
A single twig from one of those ill plants,
The thought thou hast conceived shall vanish quite."
Thereat a little stretching forth my hand,
From a great wilding gather'd I a branch,
And straight the trunk exclaim'd: "Why pluck'st thou me?"
Then, as the dark blood trickled down its side,
These words it added: "Wherefore tear'st me thus?
Is there no touch of mercy in thy breast?
Men once were we, that now are rooted here.
Thy hand might well have spared us, had we been
The souls of serpents." As a brand yet green,
That burning at one end from the other sends
A groaning sound, and hisses with the wind
That forces out its way, so burst at once
Forth from the broken splinter words and blood.
I, letting fall the bough, remain'd as one
Assail'd by terror; and the sage replied:
"If he, O injured spirit! could have believed
What he hath seen but in my verse described,
He never against thee had stretch'd his hand.
But I, because the thing surpass'd belief,
Prompted him to this deed, which even now
Myself I rue. But tell me, who thou wast;
That, for this wrong to do thee some amends,
In the upper world (for thither to return
Is granted him) thy fame he may revive."
"That pleasant word of thine," the trunk replied,
"Hath so inveigled me, that I from speech
Cannot refrain, wherein if I indulge
A little longer, in the snare detain'd,
Count it not grievous. I it was, who held

Both keys to Frederick's heart, and turn'd the wards,
Opening and shutting, with a skill so sweet,
That besides me, into his inmost breast
Scarce any other could admittance find.
The faith I bore to my high charge was such,
It cost me the life-blood that warm'd my veins.
The harlot, who ne'er turn'd her gloating eyes
From Caesar's household, common vice and pest
Of courts, 'gainst me inflamed the minds of all;
And to Augustus they so spread the flame,
That my glad honors changed to bitter woes.
My soul, disdainful and disgusted, sought
Refuge in death from scorn, and I became,
Just as I was, unjust toward myself.
By the new roots, which fix this stem, I swear,
That never faith I broke to my liege lord,
Who merited such honor; and of you,
If any to the world indeed return,
Clear he from wrong my memory, that lies
Yet prostrate under envy's cruel blow."

First somewhat pausing, till the mournful words
Were ended, then to me the bard began:
"Lose not the time; but speak, and of him ask,
If more thou wish to learn." Whence I replied:
"Question thou him again of whatsoe'er
Will, as thou think'st, content me; for no power
Have I to ask, such pity is at my heart."

He thus resumed: "So may he do for thee
Freely what thou entreatest, as thou yet
Be pleased, imprison'd spirit! to declare,
How in these gnarled joints the soul is tied;
And whether any ever from such frame
Be loosen'd, if thou canst, that also tell."

Thereat the trunk breathed hard, and the wind soon
Changed into sounds articulate like these:
"Briefly ye shall be answer'd. When departs
The fierce soul from the body, by itself
Thence torn asunder, to the seventh gulf
By Minos doom'd, into the wood it falls,

No place assign'd, but wheresoever chance
Hurls it; there sprouting, as a grain of spelt,
It rises to a sapling, growing thence
A savage plant. The Harpies, on its leaves
Then feeding, cause both pain, and for the pain
A vent to grief. We, as the rest, shall come
For our own spoils, yet not so that with them
We may again be clad; for what a man
Takes from himself it is not just he have.
Here we perforce shall drag them; and throughout
The dismal glade our bodies shall be hung,
Each on the wild thorn of his wretched shade."

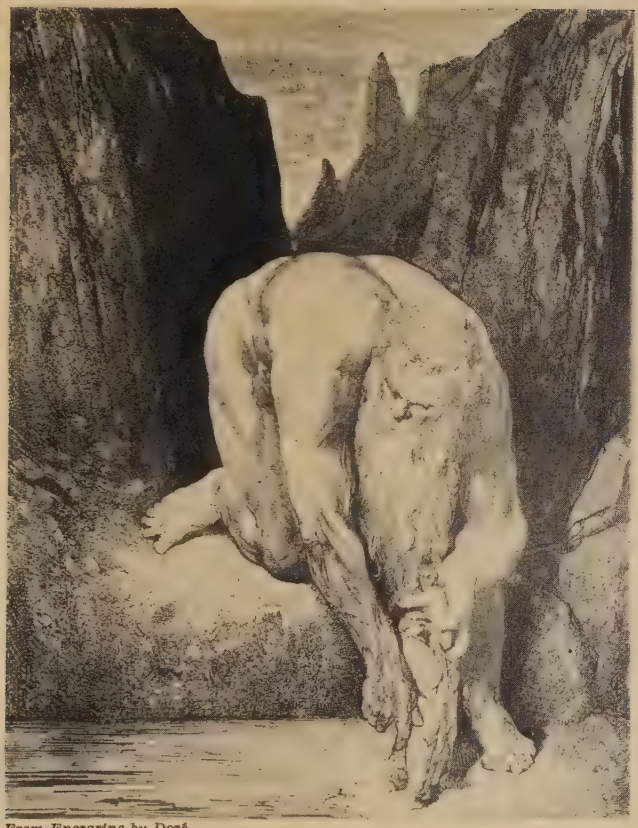
On the sands in the seventh circle, Dante is stopped by one who catches him by the skirt, and, though smirched by fire, is recognized as Brunetto Latini, who had formerly been Dante's tutor, and to whom in conversation he says:

"Were all my wish fulfill'd," I straight replied,
"Thou from the confines of man's nature yet
Hadst not been driven forth; for in my mind
Is fix'd, and now strikes full upon my heart,
The dear, benign, paternal image, such
As thine was, when so lately thou didst teach me
The way for man to win eternity:
And how I prized the lesson, it behoves,
That, long as life endures, my tongue should speak.
What of my fate thou tell'st, that write I down;
And, with another text to comment on,
For her I keep it, the celestial dame,
Who will know all, if I to her arrive.
This only would I have thee clearly note:
That, so my conscience have no plea against me,
Do Fortune as she list, I stand prepared.
Not new or strange such earnest to mine ear.
Speed Fortune then her wheel, as likes her best;
The clown his mattock; all things have their course."

In the sixth gulf are the hypocrites:

Suddenly my guide
Caught me, even as a mother that from sleep
Is by the noise aroused, and near her sees
The climbing fires, who snatches up her babe
And flies ne'er pausing, careful more of him
Than of herself, that but a single vest
Clings round her limbs. Down from the jutting beach
Supine he cast him to that pendent rock,
Which closes on one part the other chasm.
Never ran water with such hurrying pace
Adown the tube to turn a land-mill's wheel,
When nearest it approaches to the spokes,
As then along that edge my master ran,
Carrying me in his bosom, as a child,
Not a companion. Scarcely had his feet
Reach'd to the lowest of the bed beneath,
When over us the steep they reach'd: but fear
In him was none; for that high Providence,
Which placed them ministers of the fifth foss,
Power of departing thence took from them all.
There in the depth we saw a painted tribe,
Who paced with tardy steps around, and wept,
Faint in appearance and o'ercome with toil.
Caps had they on, with hoods, that fell low down
Before their eyes, in fashion like to those
Worn by the monks in Cologne. Their outside
Was overlaid with gold, dazzling to view,
But leaden all within, and of such weight
That Frederick's compared to these were straw.
Oh, everlasting wearisome attire!

In the ninth gulf, with other schismatics and heretics, is Mohammed, whose hideous appearance and horrible punishment is briefly related:



From Engraving by Doré

"YET IN THE ABYSS,
THAT LUCIFER WITH JUDAS LOW ENGULFS,
LIGHTLY HE PLACED US;"

—*Inferno, Canto XXXI*

ANTAEUS PLACED DANTE AND VERGIL IN THE LOWEST GULF.

A rundlet, that hath lost
Its middle or side stave, gapes not so wide
As one I mark'd, torn from the chin throughout
Down to the hinder passage: 'twixt the legs
Dangling his entrails hung, the midriff lay
Open to view, and wretched ventricle,
That turns the englutted aliment to dross.
Whilst eagerly I fix on him my gaze,
He eyed me, with his hands laid his breast bare,
And cried, "Now mark how I do rip me: lo!
How is Mohammed mangled: before me
Walks Ali weeping, from the chin his face
Cleft to the forelock; and the others all,
Whom here thou seest, while they lived, did sow
Scandal and schism, and therefore thus are rent.
A fiend is here behind, who with his sword
Hacks us thus cruelly, slivering again
Each of this ream, when we have compast round
The dismal way; for first our gashes close
Ere we repass before him. But, say who
Art thou, that standest musing on the rock,
Haply so lingering to delay the pain
Sentenced upon thy crimes."—"Him death not yet,"
My guide rejoin'd, "hath overta'en, nor sin
Conducts to torment; but, that he may make
Full trial of your state, I who am dead
Must through the depths of hell, from orb to orb,
Conduct him. Trust my words; for they are true."

The awful story of Count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi was well known, and Dante's vivid description of Ugolino's punishment and the crime of his torturer is one of the most frequently quoted passages in the *Inferno:*

We now had left him, passing on our way,
When I beheld two spirits by the ice
Pent in one hollow, that the head of one
Was cowl unto the other; and as bread

Is raven'd up through hunger, the uppermost
Did so apply his fangs to the other's brain,
Where the spine joins it. Not more furiously
On Menalippus' temples Tydeus gnawed,
Than on that skull and on its garbage he.
"O thou! who show'st so beastly sign of hate
'Gainst him thou prey'st on, let me hear," said I,
"The cause, on such condition, that if right
Warrant thy grievance, knowing who ye are,
And what the color of his sinning was,
I may repay thee in the world above,
If that, wherewith I speak, be moist so long."
His jaws uplifting from their fell repast,
That sinner wiped them on the hairs o' the head,
Which he behind had mangled, then began:
"Thy will obeying, I call up afresh
Sorrow past cure; which, but to think of, wrings
My heart, or ere I tell on 't. But if words,
That I may utter, shall prove seed to bear
Fruit of eternal infamy to him,
The traitor whom I gnaw at, thou at once
Shalt see me speak and weep. Who thou mayst be
I know not, nor how here below art come:
But Florentine thou seemest of a truth,
When I do hear thee, Know, I was on earth
Count Ugolino, and the Archbishop he
Ruggieri. Why I neighbor him so close,
Now list. That through effect of his ill thoughts
In him my trust reposing, I was ta'en
And after murder'd, need is not I tell.
What therefore thou canst not have heard, that is,
How cruel was the murder, shalt thou hear,
And know if he have wrong'd me. A small grate
Within that mew, which for my sake the name
Of famine bears, where others yet must pine,
Already through its opening several moons
Had shown me, when I slept the evil sleep
That from the future tore the curtain off.
This one, methought, as master of the sport,

Rode forth to chase the gaunt wolf, and his whelps,
Unto the mountain which forbids the sight
Of Lucca to the Pisan. With lean brachs
Inquisitive and keen, before him ranged
Lanfranchi with Sismondi and Gualandi.
After short course the father and the sons
Seem'd tired and lagging, and methought I saw
The sharp tusks gore their sides. When I awoke,
Before the dawn, amid their sleep I heard
My sons (for they were with me) weep and ask
For bread. Right cruel art thou, if no pang
Thou feel at thinking what my heart foretold;
And if not now, why use thy tears to flow?
Now had they waken'd; and the hour drew near
When they were wont to bring us food; the mind
Of each misgave him through his dream, and I
Heard, at its outlet underneath lock'd up
The horrible tower: whence, uttering not a word,
I look'd upon the visage of my sons.
I wept not: so all stone I felt within.
They wept: and one, my little Anselm, cried,
'Thou lookest so! Father, what ails thee?' Yet
I shed no tear, nor answer'd all that day
Nor the next night, until another sun
Came out upon the world. When a faint beam
Had to our doleful prison made its way,
And in four countenances I descried
The image of my own, on either hand
Through agony I bit; and they, who thought
I did it through desire of feeding, rose
O' the sudden, and cried, 'Father, we should grieve
Far less, if thou wouldst eat of us: thou gavest
These weeds of miserable flesh we wear;
And do thou strip them off from us again.'
Then, not to make them sadder, I kept down
My spirit in stillness. That day and the next
We all were silent. Ah, obdurate earth!
Why open'dst not upon us? When we came
To the fourth day, then Gaddo at my feet

Outstretch'd did fling him, crying, 'Hast no help
For me, my father!' There he died; and e'en
Plainly as thou seest me, saw I the three
Fall one by one 'twixt the fifth day and sixth:
Whence I betook me, now grown blind, to grope
Over them all, and for three days aloud
Call'd on them who were dead. Then, fasting got
The mastery of grief.'' Thus having spoke,
Once more upon the wretched skull his teeth
He fasten'd like a mastiff's 'gainst the bone,
Firm and unyielding. Oh, thou Pisa! shame
Of all the people, who their dwelling make
In that fair region, where the Italian voice
Is heard; since that thy neighbors are so slack
To punish, from their deep foundations rise
Capraia and Gorgona, and dam up
The mouth of Arno; that each soul in thee
May perish in the waters. What if fame
Reported that thy castles were betray'd
By Ugolino, yet no right hadst thou
To stretch his children on the rack. For them,
Brigata, Uguccione, and the pair
Of gentle ones, of whom my song hath told,
Their tender years, thou modern Thebes, did make
Uncapable of guilt.

In the fourth and last round of the ninth circle are those, covered wholly with ice, who have betrayed their benefactors, from the sight of which Dante and his conductor escape to the light of a beautiful night:

Now came I (and with fear I bid my strain
Record the marvel) where the souls were all
Whelm'd underneath, transparent, as through glass
Pellucid the frail stem. Some prone were laid;
Others stood upright, this upon the soles,
That on his head, a third with face to feet
Arch'd like a bow. When to the point we came,

Whereat my guide was pleased that I should see
The creature eminent in beauty once,
He from before me stepp'd and made me pause.
"Lo!" he exclaim'd, "lo Dis; and lo the place,
Where thou hast need to arm thy heart with strength."
How frozen and how faint I then became,
Ask me not, reader! for I write it not;
Since words would fail to tell thee of my state.
I was not dead nor living. Think thyself,
If quick conception work in thee at all,
How I did feel. That emperor, who sways
The realm of sorrow, at mid breast from the ice
Stood forth; and I in stature am more like
A giant, than the giants are his arms.
Mark now how great that whole must be, which suits
With such a part. If he were beautiful
As he is hideous now, and yet did dare
To scowl upon his Maker, well from him
May all our misery flow. Oh, what a sight!
How passing strange it seem'd, when I did spy
Upon his head three faces: one in front
Of hue vermilion, the other two with this
Midway each shoulder join'd and at the crest;
The right 'twixt wan and yellow seem'd; the left
To look on, such as come from whence old Nile
Stoops to the lowlands. Under each shot forth
Two mighty wings, enormous as became
A bird so vast. Sails never such I saw
Outstretch'd on the wide sea. No plumes had they,
But were in texture like a bat; and these
He flapp'd i' th' air, that from him issued still
Three winds, wherewith Cocytus to its depth
Was frozen. At six eyes he wept: the tears
Adown three chins distill'd with bloody foam.
At every mouth his teeth a sinner champ'd,
Bruised as with ponderous engine; so that three
Were in this guise tormented. But far more
Than from that gnawing, was the foremost pang'd
By the fierce rending, whence oft-times the back

Was stript of all its skin. "That upper spirit,
Who hath worst punishment," so spake my guide,
"Is Judas, he that hath his head within
And plies the feet without. Of th' other two,
Whose heads are under, from the murky jaw
Who hangs, is Brutus: lo! how he doth writhe
And speaks not. The other, Cassius, that appears
So large of limb. But night now re-ascends;
And it is time for parting. All is seen."

I clipp'd him round the neck; for so he bade:
And noting time and place, he, when the wings
Enough were oped, caught fast the shaggy sides,
And down from pile to pile descending stepp'd
Between the thick fell and the jagged ice.

Soon as he reach'd the point, whereat the thigh
Upon the swelling of the haunches turns,
My leader there, with pain and struggling hard,
Turn'd round his head where his feet stood before,
And grappled at the fell as one who mounts;
That into hell methought we turn'd again.

"Expect that by such stairs as these," thus spake
The teacher, panting like a man forespent,
"We must depart from evil so extreme:"
Then at a rocky opening issued forth,
And placed me on the brink to sit, next join'd
With wary step my side. I raised mine eyes,
Believing that I Lucifer should see
Where he was lately left, but saw him now
With legs held upward. Let the grosser sort,
Who see not what the point was I had past,
Bethink them if sore toil oppress'd me then.

"Arise," my master cried, "upon thy feet.
The way is long, and much uncouth the road;
And now within one hour and half of noon
The sun returns." It was no palace-hall
Lofty and luminous wherein we stood,
But natural dungeon where ill-footing was
And scant supply of light. "Ere from the abyss
I separate," thus when risen I began:

"My guide! vouchsafe few words to set me free
From error's thraldom. Where is now the ice?
How standeth he in posture thus reversed?
And how from eve to morn in space so brief
Hath the sun made his transit?" He in few
Thus answering spake: "Thou deemest thou art still
On the other side the center, where I grasp'd
The abhorred worm that boreth through the world.
Thou wast on the other side, so long as I
Descended; when I turn'd, thou didst o'erpass
That point, to which from every part is dragg'd
All heavy substance. Thou art now arrived
Under the hemisphere opposed to that,
Which the great continent doth overspread,
And underneath whose canopy expired
The Man, that was born sinless and so lived.
Thy feet are planted on the smallest sphere,
Whose other aspect is Judecca. Morn
Here rises, when there evening sets: and he,
Whose shaggy pile we scaled, yet standeth fix'd,
As at the first. On this part he fell down
From heaven; and th' earth, here prominent before,
Through fear of him did veil her with the sea,
And to our hemisphere retired. Perchance,
To shun him, was the vacant space left here,
By what of firm land on this side appears,
That sprang aloof." There is a place beneath,
From Belzebub as distant, as extends
The vaulted tomb; discover'd not by sight,
But by the sound of brooklet, that descends
This way along the hollow of a rock,
Which, as it winds with no precipitous course,
The wave hath eaten. By that hidden way
My guide and I did enter, to return
To the fair world: and heedless of repose
We climb'd, he first, I following his steps,
Till on our view the beautiful lights of Heaven
Dawn'd through a circular opening in the cave:
Thence issuing we again beheld the stars.

V. THE "PURGATORIO." Among the best of Longfellow's translations is his version of the *Divine Comedy,* and, although his work is criticized because of the absence of rhyme and a failure to appreciate the fiery spirit of Dante, yet it is so faithful to the original and of so great interest to Americans that we shall take from it what extracts we use from the *Purgatorio.*

Dante and Vergil, emerging from the inner earth at dawn, found themselves on the low flat shore of the western island:

Sweet color of the oriental sapphire,
That was upgathered in the cloudless aspect
Of the pure air, as far as the first circle,
Unto mine eyes did recommence delight
Soon as I issued forth from the dead air,
Which had with sadness filled mine eyes and breast.
The beauteous planet, that to love incites,
Was making all the orient to laugh,
Veiling the Fishes that were in her escort.
To the right hand I turned, and fixed my mind
Upon the other pole, and saw four stars
Ne'er seen before save by the primal people.
Rejoicing in their flamelets seemed the heaven.
O thou septentrional and widowed site,
Because thou art deprived of seeing these!

At the side of the pilgrims appeared a venerable old man with a long beard, which parted in two down his bosom, and his face was radiant like the sun. This proved to be the spirit of Cato the Censor, warden of the ascent to Purgatory, who permitted the pilgrims to enter, after advising Vergil as follows:

Go, then, and see thou gird this one about
With a smooth rush, and that thou wash his face,
So that thou cleanse away all stain therefrom,
For 'twere not fitting that the eye o'ercast
By any mist should go before the first
Angel, who is of those of Paradise.
This little island round about its base
Below there, yonder, where the billow beats it,
Doth rushes bear upon its washy ooze;
No other plant that putteth forth the leaf,
Or that doth indurate, can there have life,
Because it yieldeth not unto the shocks.

While standing on the shore just as "Aurora's white and vermeil-tinctured cheek to orange turned," another marvel appeared:

We still were on the border of the sea,
Like people who are thinking of their road,
Who go in heart, and with the body stay;
And lo! as when, upon the approach of morning,
Through the gross vapors Mars grows fiery red
Down in the West upon the ocean floor,
Appeared to me—may I again behold it!—
A light along the sea so swiftly coming,
Its motion by no flight of wing is equaled;
From which when I a little had withdrawn
Mine eyes, that I might question my Conductor,
Again I saw it brighter grown and larger.
Then on each side of it appeared to me
I knew not what of white, and underneath it
Little by little there came forth another.
My master yet had uttered not a word
While the first whiteness into wings unfolded;
But when he clearly recognized the pilot,
He cried: "Make haste, make haste to bow the knee:
Behold the Angel of God! fold thou thy hands!
Henceforward shalt thou see such officers!

See how he scorneth human arguments,
So that nor oar he wants, nor other sail
Than his own wings, between so distant shores.
See how he holds them pointed up to Heaven,
Fanning the air with the eternal pinions,
That do not moult themselves like mortal hair!"
Then as still nearer and more near us came
The Bird Divine, more radiant he appeared,
So that, near by, the eye could not endure him,
But down I cast it; and he came to shore
With a small vessel, very swift and light,
So that the water swallowed naught thereof.
Upon the stern stood the Celestial Pilot;
Beatitude seemed written in his face,
And more than a hundred Spirits sat within.
"*In exitu Israel de Aegypto!*"
They chanted all together in one voice,
With whatso in that psalm is after written.
Then made he sign of holy rood upon them,
Whereat all cast themselves upon the shore,
And he departed swiftly as he came.

Dante having inquired the best way to proceed, the spirits crowded around, and one, an old-time friend of Dante's, sprang forward to embrace him. Though clearly recognizable, he proved only a shadow, as three times Dante clasped his hands behind the spirit, only to find them as oft returned empty to his breast. When the friend, Casella, the musician, sang one of Dante's sonnets, all the spirits, and even Vergil himself, stood entranced, but were sternly rebuked by Cato: "How is this, ye tardy spirits? Run to the mountain to cast off those scales that from your eyes the sight of God conceal."

From Engraving by Doré

"THE HEAVENLY STEERSMAN AT THE PROW WAS SEEN
VISIBLY WRITTEN BLESSED IN HIS LOOKS."

—*Purgatorio, Canto II, 42-43*

Our poet, discovering when they stood back to the sun that only himself cast a shadow, was alarmed and looked in sudden anxiety:

"Why dost thou still mistrust?" my Comforter
Began to say to me turned wholly round;
"Dost thou not think me with thee, and that I guide
thee?
'Tis evening there already where is buried
The body within which I cast a shadow;
'Tis from Brundusium ta'en, and Naples has it.
Now if in front of me no shadow fall,
Marvel not at it more than at the heavens,
Because one ray impedeth not another.
To suffer torments, both of cold and heat,
Bodies like this that Power provides, Which wills
That how It works be not unveiled to us.
Insane is he who hopeth that our reason
Can traverse the illimitable way,
Which the One Substance in Three Persons follows!"

Soon both arrived at the foot of the mountain, and on finding it too steep to climb, they inquired and were shown the way by a troop of spirits. Among them is Manfredi, King of Naples, who sends back to his daughter a description of the way in which he died. After this, the two poets, taking a steep and narrow path, closed in on each side by rock, ascended the mountain till they reached a little ledge or cornice, where, seating themselves and turning toward the East, Dante wondered at seeing the sun on his left; while Vergil was explaining the phenomenon a voice addressed them from behind a rock, and Dante discovered it to be one of his friends, doomed to linger on this

level because of repentance delayed to the last. Others told similar tales of being overtaken by sudden and violent death while repentance was still incomplete, and besought the poet, when he should return to the world, to obtain for them the prayers of their friends, for the dead profit by the prayers of the living. Having met Sordello, a famous Provençal poet, they were advised, as evening was drawing near and the ascent of the mountain was difficult, to await the dawning of the next day in a lovely hollow, enameled with flowers that surpassed the most exquisite dyes, green with a grass brighter than emeralds and odorous with a rare and undistinguishable fragrance. He had already told them that he had traveled thus far in penance not for doing, but for not doing, the things which were his duty. In a place not made sad by torments, but merely frequented by dun shades, and where the voice of mourning was not sharp with anguish but breathed merely in sighs, Sordello abode with the little innocents who died before they were exempt from human taint. Two angels with blazing swords broken at the points kept watch over the valley, into which Sordello had conducted Vergil and Dante, and three exceedingly bright stars appeared near the pole:

> As he was speaking, to himself Sordello
> Drew him, and said, "Lo, there our Adversary!"
> And pointed with his finger to look thither.
> Upon the side on which the little valley
> No barrier hath, a serpent was; perchance

The same which gave to Eve the bitter food.
'Twixt grass and flowers came on the evil streak,
Turning at times its head about, and licking
Its back like to a beast that smoothes itself.
I did not see, and therefore cannot say
How the celestial falcons 'gan to move,
But well I saw that they were both in motion.
Hearing the air cleft by their verdant wings,
The serpent fled, and round the Angels wheeled,
Up to their stations flying back alike.

Long into the night the poet talked with those spirits whom he recognized, and one of them predicted his coming banishment. When in the morning he awoke, he found himself near the gate of Purgatory:

Only my Comforter was at my side,
And now the sun was more than two hours high,
And turned towards the sea-shore was my face.
"Be not intimidated," said my Lord,
"Be reassured, for all is well with-us;
Do not restrain, but put forth all thy strength.
Thou hast at length arrived at Purgatory;
See there the cliff that closes it around;
See there the entrance, where it seems disjoined.
Whilom at dawn, which doth precede the day,
When inwardly thy spirit was asleep
Upon the flowers that deck the land below,
There came a Lady and said: 'I am Lucia;
Let me take this one up, who is asleep;
So will I make his journey easier for him.'
Sordello and the other noble shapes
Remained; she took thee, and, as day grew bright,
Upward she came, and I upon her footsteps.
She laid thee here; and first her beauteous eyes
That open entrance pointed out to me;
Then she and sleep together went away."

In guise of one whose doubts are reassured,
And who to confidence his fear doth change,
After the truth has been discovered to him,
So did I change; and when without disquiet
My Leader saw me, up along the cliff
He moved, and I behind him, tow'rd the height.
Reader, thou seest well how I exalt
My theme, and therefore if with greater art
I fortify it, marvel not thereat.
Nearer approached we, and were in such place,
That there, where first appeared to me a rift
Like to a crevice that disparts a wall,
I saw a portal, and three stairs beneath,
Diverse in color, to go up to it,
And a gate-keeper, who yet spake no word.
And as I opened more and more mine eyes,
I saw him seated on the highest stair,
Such in the face that I endured it not.
And in his hand he had a naked sword,
Which so reflected back the sunbeams tow'rds us,
That oft in vain I lifted up mine eyes.
"Tell it from where you are, what is't you wish?"
Began he to exclaim; "Where is the escort?
Take heed your coming hither harm you not!"
"A Lady of Heaven, with these things conversant,"
My Master answered him, "but even now
Said to us, 'Thither go; there is the portal.'"
"And may she speed your footsteps in all good,"
Again began the courteous janitor;
"Come forward then unto these stairs of ours."
Thither did we approach; and the first stair
Was marble white, so polished and so smooth,
I mirrored myself therein as I appear.
The second, tinct of deeper hue than perse,
Was of a calcined and uneven stone,
Cracked all asunder lengthwise and across.
The third, that uppermost rests massively,
Porphyry seemed to me, as flaming red
As blood that from a vein is spurting forth.

Both of his feet were holding upon this
The Angel of God, upon the threshold seated,
Which seemed to me a stone of diamond.
Along the three stairs upward with good-will
Did my Conductor draw me, saying: "Ask
Humbly that he the fastening may undo."
Devoutly at the holy feet I cast me,
For mercy's sake besought that he would open,
But first upon my breast three times I smote.
Seven P's upon my forehead he described
With the sword's point, and, "Take heed that thou wash
These wounds, when thou shalt be within," he said.

The engraving of the letter P, the initial of *Peccatum* (sin), merely signifies bringing out the marks, already branded within, of the seven capital sins, which could be effaced from the body and soul only by works of penitential character. As the hinges turned, they roared thunderous tones, and as the poets entered they thought they heard a chorus of voices singing the famous hymn, *We Praise Thee, O God.* Ascending a flight of stairs, they came upon the first flight or tableland of those gradations which constitute Purgatory and the place of trial for the souls of the proud, who were bent down under heavy loads of stone. Dante, at the request of Vergil, looked upon the ground, where he saw that it was covered with tracery representing various incidents where pride has figured in history and fable:

Abreast, like oxen going in a yoke,
I with that heavy-laden Soul went on,
As long as the sweet pedagogue permitted;

But when he said, "Leave him, and onward pass,
For here 'tis good that with the sail and oars,
As much as may be, each push on his barque;"
Upright, as walking wills it, I redressed
My person, notwithstanding that my thoughts
Remained within me downcast and abashed.
I had moved on, and followed willingly
The footsteps of my Master, and we both
Already showed how light of foot we were,
When unto me he said: "Cast down thine eyes;
'Twere well for thee, to alleviate the way,
To look upon the bed beneath thy feet."
As, that some memory may exist of them,
Above the buried dead their tombs in earth
Bear sculptured on them what they were before;
Whence often there we weep for them afresh,
From pricking of remembrance, which alone
To the compassionate doth set its spur;
So saw I there, but of a better semblance
In point of artifice, with figures covered
Whate'er as pathway from the mount projects.
I saw that one who was created noble
More than all other creatures, down from heaven
Flaming with lightnings fall upon one side.
I saw Briareus smitten by the dart
Celestial, lying on the other side,
Heavy upon the earth by mortal frost.
I saw Thymbraeus, Pallas saw, and Mars,
Still clad in armor round about their father,
Gaze at the scattered members of the giants.
I saw, at foot of his great labor, Nimrod,
As if bewildered, looking at the people
Who had been proud with him in Sennaar.
O Niobe! with what afflicted eyes
Thee I beheld upon the pathway traced,
Between thy seven and seven children slain!
O Saul! how fallen upon thy proper sword
Didst thou appear there lifeless in Gilboa,
That felt thereafter neither rain nor dew!

O mad Arachne! so I thee beheld
E'en then half spider, sad upon the shreds
Of fabric wrought in evil hour for thee!
O Rehoboam! no more seems to threaten
Thine image there; but full of consternation
A chariot bears it off, when none pursues!
Displayed moreo'er the adamantine pavement
How unto his own mother made Alcmaeon
Costly appear the luckless ornament:
Displayed how his own sons did throw themselves
Upon Sennacherib within the temple,
And how, he being dead, they left him there;
Displayed the ruin and the cruel carnage
That Tomyris wrought, when she to Cyrus said,
"Blood didst thou thirst for, and with blood I glut thee!"
Displayed how routed fled the Assyrians
After that Holofernes had been slain,
And likewise the remainder of that slaughter.
I saw there Troy in ashes and in caverns;
O Ilion! thee, how abject and debased,
Displayed the image that is there discerned!
Who e'er of pencil master was or stile,
That could portray the shades and traits which there
Would cause each subtile genius to admire?
Dead seemed the dead, the living seemed alive;
Better than I saw not who saw the truth,
All that I trod upon while bowed I went.
Now wax ye proud, and on with looks uplifted,
Ye sons of Eve, and bow not down your faces
So that ye may behold your evil ways!

Continuing the ascent, they passed through the second terrace, where the sin of envy is purged, and onward to the fourth cornice, in which gloominess or indifference is cast aside. One by one the letters were erased from the forehead of Dante as he passed beyond the sin

which they represented. With discourses between themselves and conversation with the spirits of the men and women whom they met there, they passed onward and upward, meeting with obstacles and overcoming them, suffering from fear and being released from it, until the end. On the seventh terrace Dante talked with the poet Guido Guinicelli, one of the earliest writers in pure Italian, and was asked by him to say a *pater noster* for the repose of his soul. The eighth staircase and the whole terrace is surrounded by fire, and no penitent soul can reach the level without passing through the flamewreath. Along a narrow pathway on the extreme edge of the precipice they trod, a great wind from the outside keeping the flames from crossing the path. Dante was compelled to give his attention to his footsteps to avoid destruction and to keep from being overwhelmed by the crowds of spirits that passed in the same direction. Before the perilous journey was ended, night came and not another upward step was possible, so Dante and his two companions lay down, each on a little stair between the high walls of the narrow ascent:

Little could there be seen of things without;
But through that little I beheld the stars
More luminous and larger than their wont.
Thus ruminating, and beholding these,
Sleep seized upon me,—sleep, that oftentimes
Before a deed is done has tidings of it.
It was the hour, I think, when from the East
First on the mountain Cytherea beamed,

Who with the fire of love seems always burning;
Youthful and beautiful in dreams methought
I saw a lady walking in a meadow,
Gathering flowers; and singing she was saying:
"Know whosoever may my name demand
That I am Leah, and go moving round
My beauteous hands to make myself a garland.
To please me at the mirror, here I deck me,
But never does my sister Rachel leave
Her looking-glass, and sitteth all day long.
To see her beauteous eyes as eager is she,
As I am to adorn me with my hands;
Her, seeing, and me, doing satisfies."

Leah is the symbol of active life; Rachel, of the more perfect contemplative life.

When Dante awoke the first rays of the sun were visible, and into his soul crept a happiness which every traveler feels as he nears home. Vergil and Statius, who had joined the party, were already up, and all three resumed their way, reached the mountain top, and gazed about on the Terrestrial Paradise. They had passed the steep ways and the narrow; the sun shone upon their heads; the grass, the flowers and the shrubs surrounded them. Here Vergil turned to Dante and told him to sit down or walk freely about, expecting no more assistance, following only his own will; "I invest thee then with crown and miter, sovereign of thyself."

Shelley translates:

And earnest to explore within—around—
The divine wood, whose thick green living woof
Tempered the young day to the sight—I wound

Up the green slope, beneath the forest's roof,
With slow, soft steps leaving the mountain's steep,
And sought those inmost labyrinths, motion-proof,

Against the air, that in that stillness deep
And solemn, struck upon my forehead bare,
Like the sweet breathing of a child asleep:

Already I had lost myself so far
Amid that tangled wilderness that I
Perceived not where I ventured, but no fear

Of wandering from my way disturbed, when nigh
A little stream appeared; the grass that grew
Thick on its banks impeded suddenly

My going on. Water of purest hue
On earth, would appear turbid and impure
Compared with this, whose unconcealing dew,

Dark, dark, yet clear, moved under the obscure
Eternal shades, whose interwoven looms
The rays of moon or sunlight ne'er endure.

I moved not with my feet, but mid the glooms
Pierced with my charmed eye, contemplating
The mighty multitude of fresh May blooms

Which starred that night, when, even as a thing
That suddenly, for blank astonishment,
Charms every sense, and makes all thought take wing,—

A solitary woman! and she went
Singing and gathering flower after flower,
With which her way was painted and besprent.

"Bright lady, who, if looks had ever power
To bear true witness of the heart within,
Dost bask under the beams of love, come lower

Towards this bank. I prithee let me win
This much of thee, to come, that I may hear
Thy song: like Proserpine, in Enna's glen,

Thou seemest to my fancy, singing here
And gathering flowers, as that fair maiden when
She lost the Spring, and Ceres her, more dear."

The lady is named Matilda; she explains in answer to his question certain things concerning the place and tells him that the water which separates them is called Lethe. On this tableland grows every seed-producing fruit, and when upon the earth some new plant springs into being the seed has been dropped from Eden, but on earth the fruit cannot be that which would be borne in Paradise. During the conversation Dante, on his side of Lethe, had kept pace with Matilda:

Nor even thus our way continued far
Before the lady wholly turned herself
Unto me, saying, "Brother, look and listen."
And lo! a sudden luster ran across
On every side athwart the spacious forest,
Such that it made me doubt if it were lightning.
But since the lightning ceases as it comes,
And that continuing brightened more and more,
Within my thought I said, "What thing is this?"
And a delicious melody there ran
Along the luminous air, whence holy zeal
Made me rebuke the hardihood of Eve;
For there where earth and heaven obedient were,
The woman only, and but just created,
Could not endure to stay 'neath any veil;
Underneath which had she devoutly stayed,
I sooner should have tasted those delights
Ineffable, and for a longer time.

242

The procession which was approaching Dante was marvelous indeed. A divine spectacle of holy mystery, with evangelical and apocalyptic images which gradually gave way, disclosing a car brighter than the chariot of the sun, accompanied by celestial nymphs and showered upon by angels with a cloud of flowers, in the midst of which stood a maiden in a white veil crowned with olive. The love that had never left Dante's heart told him who it was and, trembling, he turned round to Vergil for encouragement, but Vergil was gone and, realizing his loss, the poet wept scalding tears of regret:

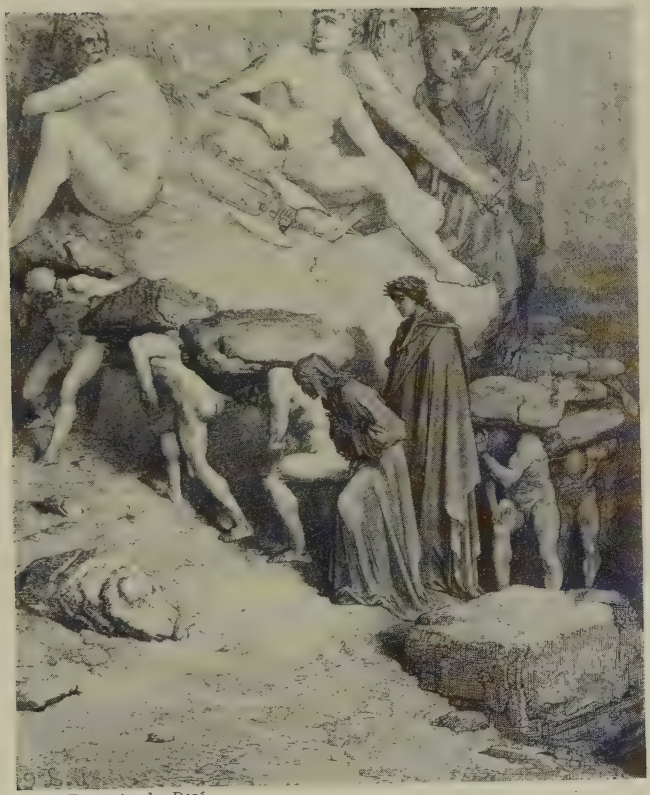
"Dante, because Virgilius has departed
Do not weep yet, do not weep yet a while;
For by another sword thou needs must weep."
E'en as an admiral, who on poop and prow
Comes to behold the people that are working
In other ships, and cheers them to well-doing,
Upon the left-hand border of the car,
When at the sound I turned of my own name,
Which of necessity is here recorded,
I saw the Lady, who erewhile appeared
Veiled underneath the angelic festival,
Direct her eyes to me across the river.
Although the veil, that from her head descended,
Encircled with the foliage of Minerva,
Did not permit her to appear distinctly,
In attitude still royally majestic
Continued she, like unto one who speaks,
And keeps his warmest utterance in reserve:
"Look at me well; in sooth I'm Beatrice!
How didst thou deign to come unto the Mountain?
Didst thou not know that man is happy here?"
Mine eyes fell downward into the clear fountain,

But, seeing myself therein, I sought the grass,
So great a shame did weigh my forehead down.
As to the son the mother seems superb,
So she appeared to me; for somewhat bitter
Tasteth the savor of severe compassion.
Silent became she, and the Angels sang
Suddenly, "*In Te, Domine, speravi:*"[1]
But beyond *pedes meos*[2] did not pass.
Even as the snow among the living rafters
Upon the back of Italy congeals,
Blown on and drifted by Sclavonian winds,
And then, dissolving, trickles through itself
Whene'er the land that loses shadow breathes,
So that it seems a fire that melts a taper;
E'en thus was I without a tear or sigh,
Before the song of those who sing for ever
After the music of the eternal spheres.
But when I heard in their sweet melodies
Compassion for me, more than had they said,
"O wherefore, lady, dost thou thus upbraid him?"
The ice, that was about my heart congealed,
To air and water changed, and in my anguish
Through mouth and eyes came gushing from my breast.
She, on the right-hand border of the car
Still firmly standing, to those holy beings
Thus her discourse directed afterwards:
"Ye keep your watch in the eternal day,
So that nor night nor sleep can steal from you
One step the ages make upon their path;
Therefore my answer is with greater care,
That he may hear me who is weeping yonder,
So that the sin and dole be of one measure.
Not only by the work of those great wheels,
That destine every seed unto some end,
According as the stars are in conjunction,
But by the largess of celestial graces,
Which have such lofty vapors for their rain
That near to them our sight approaches not,

[1]In thee, O Lord, have I hoped. [2]"My feet" (Psalm XXX, 2–9).

Such had this man become in his new life
Potentially, that every righteous habit
Would have made admirable proof in him;
But so much more malignant and more savage
Becomes the land untilled and with bad seed,
The more good earthly vigor it possesses.
Some time did I sustain him with my look;
Revealing unto him my youthful eyes,
I led him with me turned in the right way.
As soon as ever of my second age
I was upon the threshold and changed life,
Himself from me he took and gave to others.
When from the flesh to spirit I ascended
And beauty and virtue were in me increased,
I was to him less dear and less delightful;
And into ways untrue he turned his steps,
Pursuing the false images of good,
That never any promises fulfill;
Nor prayer for inspiration me availed,
By means of which in dreams and otherwise
I called him back, so little did he heed them.
So low he fell, that all appliances
For his salvation were already short,
Save showing him the people of perdition.
For this I visited the gates of death,
And unto him, who so far up has led him,
My intercessions were with weeping borne.
God's lofty fiat would be violated,
If Lethe should be passed, and if such viands
Should tasted be, withouten any scot
Of penitence, that gushes forth in tears."

"O thou who art beyond the sacred river,"
Turning to me the point of her discourse,
That edgewise even had seemed to me so keen,
She recommenced, continuing without pause,
"Say, say if this be true; to such a charge
Thy own confession needs must be conjoined."
My faculties were in so great confusion,



From Engraving by Doré

"WITH EQUAL PACE, AS OXEN IN THE YOKE,
I, WITH THAT LADEN SPIRIT, JOURNEYED ON,
LONG AS THE MILD INSTRUCTOR SUFFER'D ME."

—*Purgatorio, Canto XII, 1-3*

That the voice moved, but sooner was extinct
Than by its organs it was set at large.
A while she waited; then she said: "What thinkest?
Answer me; for the mournful memories
In thee not yet are by the waters injured."
Confusion and dismay together mingled
Forced such a Yes! from out my mouth, that sight
Was needful to the understanding of it.
Even as a cross-bow breaks, when 'tis discharged
Too tensely drawn the bowstring and the bow,
And with less force the arrow hits the mark,
So I gave way beneath that heavy burden,
Outpouring in a torrent tears and sighs,
And the voice flagged upon its passage forth.
Whence she to me: "In those desires of mine
Which led thee to the loving of that good,
Beyond which there is nothing to aspire to,
What trenches lying traverse or what chains
Didst thou discover, that of passing onward
Thou shouldst have thus despoiled thee of the hope?
And what allurements or what vantages
Upon the forehead of the others showed,
That thou shouldst turn thy footsteps unto them?"
After the heaving of a bitter sigh,
Hardly had I the voice to make response,
And with fatigue my lips did fashion it.
Weeping I said: "The things that present were
With their false pleasure turned aside my steps,
Soon as your countenance concealed itself."
And she: "Shouldst thou be silent, or deny
What thou confessest, not less manifest
Would be thy fault, by such a Judge 'tis known.
But when from one's own cheeks comes bursting forth
The accusal of the sin, in our tribunal
Against the edge the wheel doth turn itself.
But still, that thou mayst feel a greater shame
For thy transgression, and another time
Hearing the Sirens thou mayst be more strong,
Cast down the seed of weeping and attend

So shalt thou hear, how in an opposite way
My buried flesh should have directed thee.
Never to thee presented art or nature
Pleasure so great as the fair limbs wherein
I was enclosed, which scattered are in earth.
And if the highest pleasure thus did fail thee
By reason of my death, what mortal thing
Should then have drawn thee into its desire?
Thou oughtest verily at the first shaft
Of things fallacious to have risen up
To follow me, who was no longer such.
Thou oughtest not to have stooped thy pinions downward
To wait for further blows, or little girl,
Or other vanity of such brief use.
The callow birdlet waits for two or three,
But to the eyes of those already fledged,
In vain the net is spread or shaft is shot."
Even as children silent in their shame
Stand listening with their eyes upon the ground,
And conscious of their fault, and penitent;
So was I standing; and she said: "If thou
In hearing sufferest pain, lift up thy beard
And thou shalt feel a greater pain in seeing."
With less resistance is a robust holm
Uprooted, either by a native wind
Or else by that from regions of Iarbas,
Than I upraised at her command my chin:
And when she by the beard the face demanded,
Well I perceived the venom of her meaning.
And as my countenance was lifted up,
Mine eye perceived those creatures beautiful
Had rested from the strewing of the flowers;
And, still but little reassured, mine eyes
Saw Beatrice turned round towards the monster,
That is one person only in two natures.
Beneath her veil, beyond the margent green,
She seemed to me far more her ancient self
To excel, than others here, when she was here.
So pricked me then the thorn of penitence,

That of all other things the one which turned me
Most to its love became the most my foe.
Such self-conviction stung me at the heart
O'erpowered I fell, and what I then became
She knoweth who had furnished me the cause.

Before Dante had recovered consciousness, Matilda had immersed him in the waters of Lethe and drawn him across, while angels sang *Wash Me and I Shall Be Whiter Than Snow.* She then delivered him into the hands of the nymphs that had danced about the car, and a song burst from the lips of the angels, while Faith, Hope and Charity called upon Beatrice to unveil her face. When she did so, Dante sank his ten years of longing in his gaze at her ineffable features:

O splendor!
O sacred light eternal! who is he,
So pale with musing in Pierian shades,
Or with that fount so lavishly imbued,
Whose spirit should not fail him in the essay
To represent thee such as thou didst seem,
When under cope of the still-chiming heaven
Thou gavest to open air thy charms reveal'd?

Dante was warned not to gaze too fixedly on Beatrice, and the procession moved on to the shade of a lofty tree, where, after seeing visions, singing hymns and hearing the prediction of future events, the whole band went onward to the fountain, whence the two streams Lethe and Eunoe separate to flow in different directions. At the desire of Beatrice, Matilda gave the poet to drink from the latter stream and thereby revived the memory of good:

And more coruscant and with slower steps
The sun was holding the meridian circle,
Which, with the point of view, shifts here and there
When halted (as he cometh to a halt,
Who goes before a squadron as its escort,
If something new he find upon his way)
The ladies seven at a dark shadow's edge,
Such as, beneath green leaves and branches black,
The Alp upon its frigid border wears.
In front of them the Tigris and Euphrates
Methought I saw forth issue from one fountain,
And slowly part, like friends, from one another.
"O light, O glory of the human race!
What stream is this which here unfolds itself
From not one source, and from itself withdraws?"
For such a prayer, 'twas said unto me, "Pray
Matilda that she tell thee;" and here answered,
As one does who doth free himself from blame,
The beautiful lady: "This and other things
Were told to him by me; and sure I am
The water of Lethe has not hid them from him."
And Beatrice: "Perhaps a greater care,
Which oftentimes our memory takes away,
Has made the vision of his mind obscure.
But Eunoe behold, that yonder rises;
Lead him to it, and, as thou art accustomed,
Revive again the half-dead virtue in him."
Like gentle soul, that maketh no excuse,
But makes its own will of another's will
As soon as by a sign it is disclosed,
Even so, when she had taken hold of me,
The beautiful lady moved, and unto Statius
Said, in her womanly manner, "Come with him."
If, Reader, I possessed a longer space
For writing it, I yet would sing in part
Of the sweet draught that ne'er would satiate me:
But inasmuch as full are all the leaves
Made ready for this second canticle,
The curb of art no farther lets me go.

From the most holy water I returned
Regenerate, in the manner of new trees
That are renewed with a new foliage,
Pure and disposed to mount unto the stars.

VI. THE "PARADISO." Dante's writings are like those of a prophet; there is nothing to which the *Divine Comedy* bears so close an analogy as to the *Revelation* of St. John. But the wholly unprecedented thing is that Dante should people his unseen worlds with his contemporaries, the men whose friendship or enmity he had possessed, people known personally or by reputation to his readers. If we have not quoted more to show this astonishing peculiarity, it is because of the fugitive interest such things possess to a stranger; but it is not a characteristic to forget. The *Purgatorio* we have seen is the life of converted sinners, of those souls who are striving Godward, after the state of innocence has been regained in the Earthly Paradise. The *Paradiso* gives the ideal life of action and contemplation of the disembodied spirits, closing in an earthly foretaste of the Beatific Vision. Symonds says, "The whole *Purgatorio* is a monument to the beauty and tranquillity of Dante's soul. The whole *Paradiso* is a proof of its purity and radiance and celestial love."

In the *Inferno* we have witnessed the misery of sin; in the *Purgatorio,* the struggles of virtue; but it is not in the delights of the Terrestrial Paradise that man's high destiny finds its accomplishment. As through the sin of

Adam all forfeited the blissful state of innocence, so all who are justified through the merits of Christ recover the happiness of their first parents and attain a higher felicity than was known to them.

To describe that felicity, to find words to convey to finite minds the joys of the infinite, to picture what eye hath not seen, to speak in tones that ear hath not heard, was a stupendous task and one that no ordinary mortal would attempt, yet Dante begins by boldly asserting his intention of describing the marvelous things which he had seen. Gazing upon Beatrice, his eyes become so inured to brilliancy that he is enabled to bear for a little while the intense glow of Divine Light. While so gazing, he is insensibly translated from earth to Heaven. Here, aided by Beatrice, he gazes upon the sun and hears the music of the spheres:

Morning there,
Here eve was well nigh by such passage made;
And whiteness had o'erspread that hemisphere,
Blackness the other part: when to the left
I saw Beatrice turn'd, and on the sun
Gazing, as never eagle fix'd his ken.
As from the first a second beam is wont
To issue, and reflected upwards rise,
Even as a pilgrim bent on his return;
So of her act, that through the eyesight pass'd
Into my fancy, mine was form'd: and straight,
Beyond our mortal wont, I fix'd mine eyes
Upon the sun. Much is allow'd us there,
That here exceeds our power; thanks to the place
Made for the dwelling of the human kind.

I suffer'd it not long; and yet so long,
That I beheld it bickering sparks around,
As iron that comes boiling from the fire.
And suddenly upon the day appear'd
A day new-risen; as he, who hath the power,
Had with another sun bedeck'd the sky.
Her eyes fast fix'd on the eternal wheels,
Beatrice stood unmoved; and I with ken
Fix'd upon her, from upward gaze removed,
At her aspect, such inwardly became
As Glaucus, when he tasted of the herb
That made him peer among the ocean gods:
Words may not tell of that transhuman change;
And therefore let the example serve, though weak,
For those whom grace hath better proof in store.
If I were only what thou didst create,
Then newly, Love! by whom the heaven is ruled;
Thou know'st, who by thy light didst bear me up.
Whenas the wheel which thou dost ever guide,
Desired Spirit! with its harmony,
Temper'd of thee and measured, charm'd mine ear
Then seem'd to me so much of heaven to blaze
With the sun's flame, that rain or flood ne'er made
A lake so broad. The newness of the sound,
And that great light, inflamed me with desire,
Keener than e'er was felt, to know their cause.
Whence she, who saw me, clearly as myself,
To calm my troubled mind, before I ask'd,
Open'd her lips, and gracious thus began:
"With false imagination thou thyself
Makest dull; so that thou seest not the thing,
Which thou hadst seen, had that been shaken off.
Thou art not on the earth as thou believest;
For lightning, scaped from its own proper place,
Ne'er ran, as thou hast hither now return'd."

The first of the Heavens is located in the moon; the translation proceeds with the following lines:

Meseem'd as if a cloud had cover'd us,
Translucent, solid, firm, and polish'd bright,
Like adamant, which the sun's beam had smit.
Within itself the ever-during pearl
Received us; as the wave a ray of light
Receives, and rests unbroken. If I then
Was of corporeal frame, and it transcend
Our weaker thought, how one dimension thus
Another could endure, which needs must be
If body enter body; how much more
Must the desire inflame us to behold
That essence, which discovers by what means
God and our nature join'd! There will be seen
That, which we hold through faith; not shown by proof,
But in itself intelligibly plain,
E'en as the truth that man at first believes.

This, as a sister tells him, is the abode of those who having made a vow of chastity and a religious life had been compelled to violate their vows. Beatrice removes doubts that throng his mind and satisfies him that it is possible to make satisfaction for a broken vow. Thereafter they ascend to the planet Mercury, which is the Second Heaven, and there among the multitude of spirits find the Emperor Justinian, who offers to satisfy the inquiries of Dante and relates his own experiences. In consequence of some things Justinian says, Dante began to have doubts respecting human redemption, but these are fully explained away by Beatrice:

"Thou in thy thought art pondering (as I deem,
And what I deem is truth) how just revenge
Could be with justice punish'd: from which doubt
I soon will free thee; so thou mark my words;

For they of weighty matter shall possess thee.
Through suffering not a curb upon the power
That will'd in him, to his own profiting,
That man, who was unborn, condemn'd himself;
And, in himself, all, who since him have lived,
His offspring: whence, below, the human kind
Lay sick in grievous error many an age;
Until it pleased the Word of God to come
Amongst them down, to His own person joining
The nature from its Maker far estranged,
By the mere act of His eternal love.
Contemplate here the wonder I unfold.
The nature with its Maker thus conjoin'd,
Created first was blameless, pure and good;
But, through itself alone, was driven forth
From Paradise, because it had eschew'd
The way of truth and life, to evil turn'd.
Ne'er then was penalty so just as that
Inflicted by the cross, if thou regard
The nature in assumption doom'd; ne'er wrong
So great, in reference to Him, who took
Such nature on Him, and endured the doom.
So different effects flow'd from one act:
For by one death God and the Jews were pleased;
And heaven was open'd, though the earth did quake.
Count it not hard henceforth, when thou dost hear
That a just vengeance was, by righteous court,
Justly revenged. But yet I see thy mind,
By thought on thought arising, sore perplex'd;
And, with how vehement desire, it asks
Solution of the maze. What I have heard,
Is plain, thou say'st: but wherefore God this way
For our redemption chose, eludes my search.

"Brother! no eye of man not perfected,
Nor fully ripen'd in the flame of love,
May fathom this decree. It is a mark,
In sooth, much aim'd at, and but little kenn'd:
And I will therefore show thee why such way
Was worthiest. The celestial love, that spurns

All envying in its bounty, in itself
With such effulgence blazeth, as sends forth
All beauteous things eternal. What distils
Immediate thence, no end of being knows;
Bearing its seal immutably imprest.
Whatever thence immediate falls, is free,
Free wholly, uncontrollable by power
Of each thing new: by such conformity
More grateful to its author, whose bright beams,
Though all partake their shining, yet in those
Are liveliest, which resemble Him the most.
These tokens of pre-eminence on man
Largely bestow'd, if any of them fail,
He needs must forfeit his nobility,
No longer stainless. Sin alone is that,
Which doth disfranchise him, and make unlike
To the chief good; for that its light in him
Is darken'd. And to dignity thus lost
Is no return; unless, where guilt makes void,
He for ill pleasure pay with equal pain.
Your nature, which entirely in its seed
Transgress'd, from these distinctions fell, no less
Than from its state in Paradise; nor means
Found of recovery (search all methods out
As strictly as thou may) save one of these,
The only fords were left through which to wade:
Either, that God had of His courtesy
Released him merely; or else, man himself
For his own folly by himself atoned.

"Fix now thine eye, intently as thou canst,
On the everlasting counsel; and explore,
Instructed by my words, the dread abyss.

"Man in himself had ever lack'd the means
Of satisfaction, for he could not stoop
Obeying, in humility so low,
As high, he, disobeying, thought to soar:
And, for this reason, he had vainly tried,
Out of his own sufficiency, to pay
The rigid satisfaction. Then behoved

That God should by His own ways lead him back
Unto the life, from whence he fell, restored:
By both his ways, I mean, or one alone.
But since the deed is ever prized the more,
The more the doer's good intent appears;
Goodness celestial, whose broad signature
Is on the universe, of all its ways
To raise ye up, was fain to leave out none.
Nor aught so vast or so magnificent,
Either for him who gave or who received,
Between the last night and the primal day,
Was or can be. For God more bounty show'd,
Giving Himself to make man capable
Of his return to life, than had the terms
Been mere and unconditional release.
And for His justice, every method else
Were all too scant, had not the Son of God
Humbled Himself to put on mortal flesh.

"Now, to content thee fully, I revert;
And further in some part unfold my speech,
That thou mayest see it clearly as myself.

"I see, thou sayst, the air, the fire I see,
The earth and water, and all things of them
Compounded, to corruption turn, and soon
Dissolve. Yet these were also things create,
Because, if what were told me, had been true,
They from corruption had been therefore free.

"The angels, O my brother! and this clime
Wherein thou art, impassible and pure,
I call created, even as they are
In their whole being. But the elements,
Which thou hast named, and what of them is made,
Are by created virtue inform'd: create,
Their substance; and create, the informing virtue
In these bright stars, that round them circling move.
The soul of every brute and of each plant,
The ray and motion of the sacred lights,
Draw from complexion with meet power endued.
But this our life the eternal good inspires

Immediate, and enamors of itself;
So that our wishes rest for ever here.
"And hence thou mayst by inference conclude
Our resurrection certain, if thy mind
Consider how the human flesh was framed,
When both our parents at the first were made."

In the Third Heaven, which is the planet Venus, Dante meets the soul of Charles Martel, who explains why children are so different from their parents. Spirits of other famous characters in history and tradition tell him more of redemption and prepare him to ascend into the Fourth Heaven, where he and his lovely guide find themselves surrounded by a wreath of blessed spirits, of whom Thomas Aquinas is the spokesman who introduces the others. This is the way Boëthius is described:

Now, if thy mind's eye pass from light to light,
Upon my praises following, of the eighth
Thy thirst is next. The saintly soul, that shows
The world's deceitfulness, to all who hear him,
Is, with the sight of all the good that is,
Blest there. The limbs, whence it was driven, lie
Down in Cieldauro; and from martyrdom
And exile came it here.

Encompassing the first circle of glorified souls is a second one, all of whom are named and described in a few words, after which Thomas Aquinas solves more doubts for Dante, to whom is given the following excellent advice:

"Let not the people be too swift to judge;
As one who reckons on the blades in field,

From Engraving by Doré

"AND I BEHELD MYSELF,
SOLE WITH MY LADY, TO MORE LOFTY BLISS
TRANSLATED."

—*Paradiso. Canto XIV*

Or e'er the crop be ripe. For I have seen
The thorn frown rudely all the winter long,
And after bear the rose upon its top;
And bark, that all her way across the sea
Ran straight and speedy, perish at the last
E'en in the haven's mouth."

Solomon, one of the spirits in the inner circle, tells what the experience of the blessed will be after the resurrection of the body, and then Dante is translated into the Fifth Heaven (Mars), where he beholds, arranged in the sign of a cross, the souls of those who died fighting for the true faith, and as the spirits, to the sound of a melodious hymn, move back and forth, one of Dante's ancestors glides to the foot of the cross, tells who he is, and describes the simple life of Florence in the earlier times, after which he speaks of its modern degeneracy and gives the reasons for it, closing finally by predicting the banishment and calamities which Dante will have to suffer and by urging him to write this poem. In the Sixth Heaven (Jupiter) he finds the souls who administered justice rightly in the world arranged in the form of an eagle and declaring with one voice the cause for which they have been exalted to that state of glory. The eagle solves the poet's doubt respecting the possibility of salvation without a belief in Christ, and after prophesying evil to many professing Christians celebrates the praise of certain kings whose glorified spirits form the eye of the eagle. In the pupil is David, and in the circle around it

appear Trajan, Hezekiah, Constantine and others, many of whom have by means which the eagle explains brought their souls to this high distinction without having had the means of believing in Christ.

In the Seventh Heaven (Saturn) is placed a ladder so lofty that the top of it cannot be seen, and here are the souls of those who passed their life in ascetic retirement and contemplation. After conversing with some of these devout spirits, Dante with his heavenly conductor mounts to the Eighth, or Starry, Heaven, whence, looking back, he sees the earth:

The sweet dame beckon'd me to follow them:
And, by that influence only, so prevail'd
Over my nature, that no natural motion,
Ascending or descending here below,
Had, as I mounted, with my pennon vied.
So, reader, as my hope is to return
Unto the holy triumph, for the which
I oft-times wail my sins, and smite my breast;
Thou hadst been longer drawing out and thrusting
Thy finger in the fire, than I was, ere
The sign, that followeth Taurus, I beheld,
And enter'd its precinct. O glorious stars!
O light impregnate with exceeding virtue!
To whom whate'er of genius lifteth me
Above the vulgar, grateful I refer;
With ye the parent of all mortal life
Arose and set, when I did first inhale
The Tuscan air; and afterward, when grace
Vouchsafed me entrance to the lofty wheel
That in its orb impels ye, fate decreed
My passage at your clime. To you my soul
Devoutly sighs, for virtue, even now,

To meet the hard emprize that draws me on.
"Thou art so near the sum of blessedness,"
Said Beatrice, "that behoves thy ken
Be vigilant and clear. And, to this end,
Or ever thou advance thee further, hence
Look downward, and contemplate, what a world
Already stretch'd under our feet there lies:
So as thy heart may, in its blithest mood,
Present itself to the triumphal throng,
Which, through the ethereal concave, comes rejoicing."
I straight obey'd; and with mine eye return'd
Through all the seven spheres; and saw this globe
So pitiful of semblance, that perforce,
It moved my smiles: and him in truth I hold
For wisest, who esteems it least; whose thoughts
Elsewhere are fixed, him worthiest call and best.
I saw the daughter of Latona shine
Without the shadow, whereof late I deem'd
That dense and rare were cause. Here I sustain'd
The visage, Hyperion, of thy son;
And mark'd, how near him with their circles, round
Move Maia and Dione; here discern'd
Jove's tempering 'twixt his sire and son; and hence,
Their changes and their various aspects
Distinctly scann'd. Nor might I not descry
Of all the seven, how bulky each, how swift;
Nor, of their several distances, not learn.
This petty area (o'er which we stride
So fiercely), as along the eternal Twins
I wound my way, appear'd before me all,
Forth from the heavens stretch'd unto the hills.
Then, to the beauteous eyes, mine eyes return'd.

Here he sees Christ triumphing with his Church:

E'en as the bird, who midst the leafy bower
Has, in her nest, sat darkling through the night,
With her sweet brood; impatient to descry
Their wished looks, and to bring home their food,

In the fond quest unconscious of her toil:
She, of the time prevenient, on the spray,
That overhangs their couch, with wakeful gaze
Expects the sun; nor ever, till the dawn,
Removeth from the east her eager ken:
So stood the dame erect, and bent her glance
Wistfully on that region, where the sun
Abateth most his speed; that, seeing her
Suspense and wondering, I became as one,
In whom desire is waken'd, and the hope
Of somewhat new to come fills with delight.

Short space ensued; I was not held, I say,
Long in expectance, when I saw the heaven
Wax more and more resplendent; and, "Behold,"
Cried Beatrice, "the triumphal hosts
Of Christ, and all the harvest gather'd in,
Made ripe by these revolving spheres." Meseem'd,
That, while she spake, her image all did burn;
And in her eyes such fullness was of joy,
As I am fain to pass unconstrued by.

As in the calm full moon, when Trivia smiles,
In peerless beauty, 'mid the eternal nymphs,
That paint through all its gulfs the blue profound;
In bright pre-eminence so saw I there
O'er million lamps a sun, from whom all drew
Their radiance, as from ours the starry train:
And, through the living light, so lustrous glow'd
The substance, that my ken endured it not.

O Beatrice! sweet and precious guide,
Who cheer'd me with her comfortable words:
"Against the virtue, that o'erpowereth thee,
Avails not to resist. Here is the Might,
And here the Wisdom, which did open lay
The path, that had been yearned for so long,
Betwixt the heaven and earth." Like to the fire,
That, in a cloud imprison'd, doth break out
Expansive, so that from its womb enlarged,
It falleth against nature to the ground;
Thus, in that heavenly banqueting, my soul

Outgrew herself; and, in the transport lost,
Holds now remembrance none of what she was.
"Ope thou thine eyes, and mark me: thou hast seen
Things, that empower thee to sustain my smile."
I was as one, when a forgotten dream
Doth come across him, and he strives in vain
To shape it in his fantasy again:
Whenas that gracious boon was proffer'd me,
Which never may be cancel'd from the book
Wherein the past is written. Now were all
Those tongues to sound, that have, on sweetest milk
Of Polyhymnia and her sisters, fed
And fatten'd; not with all their help to boot,
Unto the thousandth parcel of the truth,
My song might shadow forth that saintly smile,
How merely, in her saintly looks, it wrought.
And, with such figuring of Paradise,
The sacred strain must leap, like one that meets
A sudden interruption to his road.
But he, who thinks how ponderous the theme,
And that 'tis laid upon a mortal shoulder,
May pardon, if it tremble with the burden.
The track, our venturous keel must furrow, brooks
No unribb'd pinnace, no self-sparing pilot.
"Why doth my face," said Beatrice, "thus
Enamor thee, as that thou dost not turn
Unto the beautiful garden, blossoming
Beneath the rays of Christ? Here is the rose,
Wherein the Word Divine was made incarnate;
And here the lilies, by whose odor known
The way of life was follow'd." Prompt I heard
Her bidding, and encounter'd once again
The strife of aching vision. As, erewhile,
Through glance of sunlight, stream'd through broken
cloud,
Mine eyes a flower-besprinkled mead have seen;
Though veil'd themselves in shade: so saw I there
Legions of splendors, on whom burning rays
Shed lightnings from above; yet saw I not

The fountain whence they flow'd. O gracious virtue!
Thou, whose broad stamp is on them, higher up
Thou didst exalt thy glory, to give room
To my o'erlabor'd sight; when at the name
Of that fair flower, whom duly I invoke
Both morn and eve, my soul with all her might
Collected, on the goodliest ardor fix'd.
And, as the bright dimensions of the star
In heaven excelling, as once here on earth,
Were, in my eye-balls livelily portray'd;
Lo! from within the sky a cresset fell,
Circling in fashion of a diadem;
And girt the star; and, hovering, round it wheel'd.
Whatever melody sounds sweetest here,
And draws the spirit most unto itself,
Might seem a rent cloud, when it grates the thunder;
Compared unto the sounding of that lyre,
Wherewith the goodliest sapphire that inlays
The floor of heaven, was crown'd. "Angelic Love
I am, who thus with hovering flight enwheel
The lofty rapture from that womb inspired,
Where our desire did dwell: and round thee so,
Lady of Heaven! will hover; long as thou
Thy Son shalt follow, and diviner joy
Shall from thy presence gild the highest sphere."
Such close was to the circling melody:
And, as it ended, all the other lights
Took up the strain, and echoed Mary's name.
The robe, that with its regal folds enwraps
The world, and with the nearer breath of God
Doth burn and quiver, held so far retired
Its inner hem and skirting over us,
That yet no glimmer of its majesty
Had stream'd unto me: therefore were mine eyes
Unequal to pursue the crowned flame,
That towering rose, and sought the seed it bore.
And like to babe, that stretches forth its arms
For very eagerness toward the breast,
After the milk is taken; so outstretch'd

Their wavy summits all the fervent band,
Through zealous love to Mary: then, in view,
There halted; and "Regina Coeli" sang
So sweetly, the delight hath left me never.
Oh! what o'erflowing plenty is up-piled
In those rich-laden coffers, which below
Sow'd the good seed, whose harvest now they keep.
Here are the treasures tasted, that with tears
Were in the Babylonian exile won,
When gold had fail'd them. Here, in synod high
Of ancient council with the new convened,
Under the Son of Mary and of God,
Victorious he his mighty triumph holds,
To whom the keys of glory were assign'd.

Thereafter Dante satisfies St. Peter, who questions him concerning Faith:

Like to the bachelor, who arms himself,
And speaks not, till the master have proposed
The question, to approve, and not to end it;
So I, in silence, arm'd me, while she spake,
Summoning up each argument to aid;
As was behoveful for such questioner,
And such profession: "As good Christian ought,
Declare thee, what is faith?" Whereat I raised
My forehead to the light, whence this had breathed;
Then turn'd to Beatrice; and in her looks
Approval met, that from their inmost fount
I should unlock the waters. "May the grace,
That giveth me the captain of the Church
For confessor," said I, "vouchsafe to me
Apt utterance for my thoughts;" then added: "Sire!
E'en as set down by the unerring style
Of thy dear brother, who with thee conspired
To bring Rome in unto the way of life,
Faith of things hoped is substance, and the proof
Of things not seen; and herein doth consist
Methinks its essence."—"Rightly hast thou deem'd,"

Was answer'd; "if thou well discern, why first
He hath defined it substance, and then proof."
"The deep things," I replied, "which here I scan
Distinctly, are below from mortal eye
So hidden, they have in belief alone
Their being; on which credence, hope sublime
Is built: and, therefore substance, it intends.
And inasmuch as we must needs infer
From such belief our reasoning, all respect
To other view excluded; hence of proof
The intention is derived." Forthwith I heard:
"If thus, whate'er by learning men attain,
Were understood; the sophist would want room
To exercise his wit." So breathed the flame
Of love; then added: "Current is the coin
Thou utter'st, both in weight and in alloy.
But tell me, if thou hast it in thy purse."
"Even so glittering and so round," said I,
"I not a whit misdoubt of its assay."
Next issued from the deep-imbosom'd splendor:
"Say, whence the costly jewel, on the which
Is founded every virtue, came to thee."
"The flood," I answer'd, "from the Spirit of God
Rain'd down upon the ancient bond and new,
Here is the reasoning, that convinceth me
So feelingly, each argument beside
Seems blunt, and forceless, in comparison."
Then heard I: "Wherefore holdest thou that each,
The elder proposition and the new,
Which so persuade thee, are the voice of heaven?"
"The works that follow'd, evidence their truth;"
I answer'd: "Nature did not make for these
The iron hot, or on her anvil mold them."
"Who voucheth to thee of the works themselves,"
Was the reply, "that they in very deed
Are that they purport? None hath sworn so to thee."
"That all the world," said I, "should have been turn'd
To Christian, and no miracle been wrought,
Would in itself be such a miracle,

The rest were not an hundredth part so great.
E'en thou went'st forth in poverty and hunger
To set the goodly plant, that, from the vine
It once was, now is grown unsightly bramble."
That ended, through the high celestial court
Resounded all the spheres, "Praise we one God!"
In song of most unearthly melody.
And when that Worthy thus, from branch to branch,
Examining, had led me, that we now
Approach'd the topmost bough; he straight resumed:
"The grace, that holds sweet dalliance with thy soul
So far discreetly hath thy lips unclosed;
That, whatsoe'er has past them, I commend.
Behoves thee to express, what thou believest,
The next; and, whereon, thy belief hath grown."
"O saintly sire and spirit!" I began,
"Who seest that, which thou didst so believe,
As to outstrip feet younger than thine own,
Toward the sepulcher; thy will is here,
That I the tenor of my creed unfold;
And thou, the cause of it, hast likewise ask'd.
And I reply: I in one God believe;
One sole eternal Godhead, of whose love
All heaven is moved, Himself unmoved the while.
Nor demonstration physical alone,
Or more intelligential and abstruse,
Persuades me to this faith: but from that truth,
It cometh to me rather, which is shed
Through Moses; the rapt Prophets; and the Psalms;
The Gospel; and what ye yourselves did write,
When ye were gifted of the Holy Ghost.
In three eternal Persons I believe;
Essence threefold and one; mysterious league
Of union absolute, which, many a time,
The word of Gospel lore upon my mind
Imprints: and from this germ, this firstling spark
The lively flame dilates; and, like heaven's star,
Doth glitter in me." As the master hears,
Well pleased, and then enfoldeth in his arms

The servant, who hath joyful tidings brought,
And having told the errand keeps his peace;
Thus benediction uttering with song,
Soon as my peace I held, compass'd me thrice
The apostolic radiance, whose behest
Had oped my lips: so well their answer pleased.
If e'er the sacred poem, that hath made
Both heaven and earth copartners in its toil,
And with lean abstinence, through many a year,
Faded my brow, be destined to prevail
Over the cruelty, which bars me forth
Of the fair sheep-fold, where, a sleeping lamb,
The wolves set on and fain had worried me;
With other voice, and fleece of other grain,
I shall forthwith return; and, standing up
At my baptismal font, shall claim the wreath
Due to the poet's temples: for I there
First enter'd on the faith, which maketh souls
Acceptable to God: and, for its sake,
Peter had then circled my forehead thus.

St. James questions Dante concerning Hope, St. John concerning Charity, after which Adam tells how he was created and placed in the Terrestrial Paradise, how long he remained in that state, what occasioned his fall, and when he was admitted into Heaven. Finally, the visitors are borne into the Ninth Heaven, where Beatrice blames the perverseness of man, who confines his will to low and perishable things. Here Dante is permitted to behold the Divine Essence in the form of a dazzling point and sees in three hierarchies the nine choirs of angels, corresponding to the Nine Heavens, over which they respectively preside. Beatrice explains how God created the angels:

Then she: "I speak, nor ask thee to declare
Thy wish—I see it on that mirror high,
In which are present every *when* and *where*.—
Not His own blissful treasure to improve,
Which cannot be—but that His splendor might
Reflected say, 'I am'—the Eternal Love,
In His eternity, ere time began,
Beyond all comprehension took delight
New combinations of His love to plan.
Nor was it erst inert, as laid asleep;
Since there was no *Before* or *After*, ere
The Holy Spirit moved upon this deep.
Matter, and form, together joined or not,
At one unerring act created were,
As from a three-stringed bow three darts are shot.
And as the ray in amber, crystal, glass,
So swiftly beams, that to the sharpest eyne
From first to last no interval may pass;
So from the mind of the great Architect
Beamed forth at once the triple work Divine,
Without distinction known in the effect.
High functions to pure Substances were given,
When first created;—these with power were graced
To execute on earth the will of heaven.
To matter lowest station was assigned,—
Compounded natures in the middle placed,
Subject to bonds, which no one may unbind.
Long tract of ages intervened (so taught
St. Jerome), after Angels were created,
Before the world was into being brought:
But the account I have inserted here
In many a page of Scripture is related,
As, if thou search it closely, will appear.
Nor doth it reasonable seem to be
That these prime Movers should have thus remained
So long of their perfection reft.—Now three
Of thy desires have been by me allayed,—
The history of these loving Ones explained,—
And when, and how, and where they first were made.

With Beatrice Dante is taken into the Empyrean, where, with sight strengthened by her aid, he sees the triumph of the angel and the souls of the blessed, but on looking around for his conductor he finds that she has returned to her throne and that an old man, who proved to be St. Bernard, has taken her place and now shows him on their several thrones Blessed Souls of both the Old and New Testament and explains how they have reached the places assigned to them by grace and not by merit, and that, if he would obtain the power to see what remained of the heavenly vision, he must unite with his guide in supplication to the Virgin Mary:

"O Virgin mother, daughter of thy Son!
Created beings all in lowliness
Surpassing, as in height above them all;
Term by the eternal counsel pre-ordain'd;
Ennobler of thy nature, so advanced
In thee, that its great Maker did not scorn,
To make Himself His own creation,
For in thy womb rekindling shone the love
Reveal'd, whose genial influence makes now
This flower to germin in eternal peace:
Here thou to us, of charity and love,
Art, as the noon-day torch; and art, beneath,
To mortal men, of hope a living spring.
So mighty art thou, lady, and so great,
That he, who grace desireth, and comes not
To thee for aidance, fain would have desire
Fly without wings. Not only him, who asks,
Thy bounty succors; but doth freely oft
Forerun the asking. Whatsoe'er may be
Of excellence in creature, pity mild,

Relenting mercy, large munificence,
Are all combined in thee. Here kneeleth one,
Who of all spirits hath review'd the state,
From the world's lowest gap unto this height.
Suppliant to thee he kneels, imploring grace
For virtue yet more high, to lift his ken
Toward the bliss supreme. And I, who ne'er
Coveted sight, more fondly, for myself,
Than now for him, my prayers to thee prefer,
(And pray they be not scant), that thou wouldst drive
Each cloud of his mortality away,
Through thine own prayers, that on the sovran joy
Unveil'd he gaze. This yet, I pray thee, Queen,
Who canst do what thou wilt; that in him thou
Wouldst, after all he hath beheld, preserve
Affection sound, and human passions quell.
Lo! where, with Beatrice, many a saint
Stretch their clasp'd hands, in furtherance of my suit."

The eyes, that heaven with love and awe regards,
Fix'd on the suitor, witness'd, how benign
She looks on pious prayers: then fasten'd they
On the everlasting light, wherein no eye
Of creature, as may well be thought, so far
Can travel inward. I, meanwhile, who drew
Near to the limit, where all wishes end,
The ardor of my wish (for so behoved)
Ended within me. Beckoning smiled the sage,
That I should look aloft: but, ere he bade,
Already of myself aloft I look'd;
For visual strength, refining more and more,
Bare me into the ray authentical
Of sovran light. Thenceforward, what I saw,
Was not for words to speak, nor memory's self
To stand against such outrage on her skill.

As one, who from a dream awaken'd, straight,
All he hath seen forgets; yet still retains
Impression of the feeling in his dream;
E'en such am I: for all the vision dies,
As 'twere, away; and yet the sense of sweet,

That sprang from it, still trickles in my heart.
Thus in the sun-thaw is the snow unseal'd;
Thus in the winds on flitting leaves was lost
The Sibyl's sentence. O eternal beam!
(Whose height what reach of mortal thought may soar?)
Yield me again some little particle
Of what thou then appearedst; give my tongue
Power, but to leave one sparkle of thy glory,
Unto the race to come, that shall not lose
Thy triumph wholly, if thou waken aught
Of memory in me, and endure to hear
The record sound in this unequal strain.
Such keenness from the living ray I met,
That, if mine eyes had turn'd away, methinks,
I had been lost; but, so embolden'd, on
I pass'd, as I remember, till my view
Hover'd the brink of dread infinitude.
O grace, unenvying of thy boon! that gavest
Boldness to fix so earnestly my ken
On the everlasting splendor, that I look'd,
While sight was unconsumed; and, in that depth,
Saw in one volume clasp'd of love, whate'er
The universe unfolds; all properties
Of substance and of accident, beheld,
Compounded, yet one individual light
The whole. And of such bond methinks I saw
The universal form; for that whene'er
I do but speak of it, my soul dilates
Beyond her proper self; and, till I speak,
One moment seems a longer lethargy,
Than five-and-twenty ages had appear'd
To that emprize, that first made Neptune wonder
At Argo's shadow darkening on his flood.
With fixed heed, suspense and motionless,
Wondering I gazed; and admiration still
Was kindled as I gazed. It may not be,
That one, who looks upon that light, can turn
To other object, willingly, his view,
For all the good, that will may covet, there

Is summ'd; and all, elsewhere defective found,
Complete. My tongue shall utter now, no more
E'en what remembrance keeps, than could the babe's
That yet is moisten'd at his mother's breast.
Not that the semblance of the living light
Was changed (that ever as at first remain'd),
But that my vision quickening, in that sole
Appearance, still new miracles descried,
And toil'd me with the change. In that abyss
Of radiance, clear and lofty, seem'd, methought,
Three orbs of triple hue, clipt in one bound:
And, from another, one reflected seem'd,
As rainbow is from rainbow: and the third
Seem'd fire, breathed equally from both. O speech!
How feeble and how faint art thou, to give
Conception birth. Yet this to what I saw
Is less than little. O eternal light!
Sole in thyself that dwell'st; and of thyself
Sole understood, past, present, or to come;
Thou smiledst, on that circling, which in thee
Seem'd as reflected splendor, while I mused;
For I therein, methought, in its own hue
Beheld our image painted: stedfastly
I therefore pored upon the view. As one,
Who versed in geometric lore, would fain
Measure the circle; and though pondering long
And deeply, that beginning, which he needs,
Finds not: e'en such was I, intent to scan
The novel wonder, and trace out the form,
How to the circle fitted, and therein
How placed: but the flight was not for my wing;
Had not a flash darted athwart my mind,
And, in the spleen, unfolded what it sought.
Here vigor fail'd the towering fantasy:
But yet the will roll'd onward, like a wheel,
In even motion, by the love impell'd,
That moves the sun in heaven and all the stars.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST PERIOD (CONTINUED)
1100–1475
DANTE'S CIRCLE

OF WHAT IT CONSISTED. Dante was greater than any of his contemporaries—so much greater that we are inclined to minify their labors. And yet there were a number of lyric poets grouped about him in point of time as well as by the nature of their work who by their very existence testify of the change in conditions which had made Dante possible. Petrarch was younger, and might well be said to be a follower of the great epic poet, but the men to whom we allude were of Dante's own age or near it, and they received from him only the assistance of a superior contemporary. We might mention many of them, but the names of Guido Cavalcanti, Cino da Pistoia and

Folgore da San Gemignano are so prominent that to each we must give some little space.

II. Guido Cavalcanti. It was to his personal friend, Guido Cavalcanti, that Dante dedicated his *Vita Nuova,* and many sonnets were exchanged between them. At one time leader of the Ghibelline faction, Cavalcanti was driven from Florence with his own party and the Guelphs when the people rose to cleanse the city, and after a banishment at Sarzana returned to his native city, to die in 1300, at the age of about fifty. He was too much of a metaphysician to make a widely-popular poet, but in spite of his philosophy he wrote lyrics of exquisite beauty. His most famous work is his *Canzone d' Amore,* but his ballads, sonnets, songs and pastorals vie with it in excellence.

The following sonnet is in praise of his lady, Joan, of Florence:

Flowers hast thou in thyself, and foliage,
And what is good, and what is glad to see;
The sun is not so bright as thy visage;
All is stark naught when one hath look'd on thee;
There is not such a beautiful personage
Anywhere on the green earth verily;
If one fear love, thy bearing sweet and sage
Comforteth him, and no more fear hath he.
Thy lady friends and maidens ministering
Are all, for love of thee, much to my taste:
And much I pray them that in everything
They honor thee even as thou meritest,
And have thee in their gentle harboring:
Because among them all thou art the best.

The following is one of Rossetti's translations, a ballata, *Of a Continual Death in Love:*

Though thou, indeed, hast quite forgotten ruth,
Its steadfast truth my heart abandons not;
But still its thought yields service in good part
To that hard heart in thee.

Alas! who hears believes not I am so.
Yet who can know? of very surety, none.
From Love is won a spirit, in some wise,
Which dies perpetually:

And, when at length in that strange ecstasy
The heavy sigh will start,
There rains upon my heart
A love so pure and fine,
That I say: "Lady, I am wholly thine."

In the following sonnet Cavalcanti seems to rebuke Dante for his manner of living:

I come to thee by daytime constantly,
But in thy thoughts too much of baseness find:
Greatly it grieves me for thy gentle mind,
And for thy many virtues gone from thee.
It was thy wont to shun much company,
Unto all sorry concourse ill inclined:
And still thy speech of me heartfelt and kind,
Had made me treasure up thy poetry.
But now I dare not, for thine abject life,
Make manifest that I approve thy rhymes;
Nor come I in such sort that thou may'st know.
Ah! prythee read this sonnet many times:
So shall that evil one who bred this strife
Be thrust from thy dishonor'd soul and go.

Concerning a Shepherd Maid is a pretty ballata:

Within a copse I met a shepherd-maid,
More fair, I said, than any star to see.
She came with waving tresses pale and bright,
With rosy cheer, and loving eyes of flame,
Guiding the lambs beneath her wand aright.
Her naked feet still had the dews on them,
As, singing like a lover, so she came;
Joyful, and fashion'd for all ecstasy.

I greeted her at once, and question made
What escort had she through the woods in spring?
But with soft accents she replied and said
That she was all alone there, wandering;
Moreover: "Do you know, when the birds sing,
My heart's desire is for a mate," said she.

While she was telling me this wish of hers,
The birds were all in song throughout the wood.
"Even now then," said my thought, "the time recurs,
With mine own longing to assuage her mood."
And so, in her sweet favor's name, I sued
That she would kiss there and embrace with me.

She took my hand to her with amorous will,
And answer'd that she gave me all her heart,
And drew me where the leaf is fresh and still,
Where spring the wood-flowers in the shade apart.
And on that day, by Joy's enchanted art,
There Love in very presence seem'd to be.

III. CINO DA PISTOIA. A successful lawyer, a teacher of law and the author of legal text-books, Guittoncino de' Sigisbuldi, better known as Cino da Pistoia, was as well a poetic friend of Dante, and only three years his junior. Like Dante and Cavalcanti, he was exiled from Florence, was a man of varied accomplishments, and wrote in a verse that has a strong

affinity to Dante's lyrics. His most celebrated poem is the canzone consoling Dante for the loss of Beatrice, of which we quote Rossetti's version:

Albeit my prayers have not so long delay'd,
But craved for thee, ere this, that Pity and Love
Which only bring our heavy life some rest;
Yet is not now the time so much o'erstay'd
But that these words of mine which tow'rds thee move
Must find thee still with spirit dispossess'd,
And say to thee: "In Heaven she now is bless'd
Even as the blessed name men call'd her by;
While thou dost ever cry,
'Alas! the blessing of mine eyes is flown!' "
Behold, these words set down
Are needed still, for still thou sorrowest.
Then hearken; I would yield advisedly
Some comfort: Stay these sighs: give ear to me.

We know for certain that in this blind world
Each man's subsistence is of grief and pain,
Still trail'd by fortune through all bitterness:
At last the flesh within a shroud is furl'd,
And unto Heaven's rejoicing doth attain
The joyful soul made free of earthly stress.
Then wherefore sighs thy heart in abjectness
Which for her triumph should exult aloud?
For He the Lord our God
Hath call'd her, hearkening what her Angel said,
To have Heaven perfected.
Each saint for a new thing beholds her face,
And she the face of our Redemption sees,
Discoursing with immortal substances.

Why now do pangs of torment clutch thy heart
Which with thy love should make thee overjoy'd,
As him whose intellect hath pass'd the skies?
Behold, the spirits of thy life depart

Daily to Heaven with her, they so are buoy'd
With their desire, and Love so bids them rise.
O God! and thou, a man whom God made wise,
To nurse a charge of care, and love the same!
I tell thee in His Name
From sin of sighing grief to hold thy breath,
Nor let thy heart to death,
Nor harbor death's resemblance in thine eyes.
God hath her with Himself eternally,
Yet she inhabits every hour with thee.

Be comforted, Love cries, be comforted!
Devotion pleads, Peace, for the love of God!
O yield thyself to prayers so full of grace;
And make thee naked now of this dull weed
Which 'neath thy foot were better to be trod;
For man through grief despairs and ends his days.
How ever shouldst thou see the lovely face
If any desperate death should once be thine?
From justice so condign
Withdraw thyself even now; that in the end
Thy heart may not offend
Against thy soul, which in the holy place,
In Heaven, still hopes to see her and to be
Within her arms. Let this hope comfort thee.

Look thou into the pleasure wherein dwells
Thy lovely lady who is in Heaven crown'd,
Who is herself thy hope in Heaven, the while
To make thy memory hallow'd, she avails;
Being a soul within the deep Heaven bound,
A face on thy heart painted, to beguile
Thy heart of grief which else should turn it vile.
Even as she seem'd a wonder here below,
On high she seemeth so,—
Yea, better known, is there more wondrous yet.
And even as she was met
First by the angels with sweet song and smile,
Thy spirit bears her back upon the wing,

Which often in those ways is journeying.
Of thee she entertains the blessed throngs,
And says to them: "While yet my body thrave
On earth, I gat much honor which he gave,
Commending me in his commended songs."
Also she asks alway of God our Lord
To give thee peace according to His word.

The following madrigal is to his Lady Selvaggia Vergiolesi:

I am all bent to glean the golden ore
Little by little from the river-bed;
Hoping the day to see
When Croesus shall be conquer'd in my store.
Therefore, still sifting where the sands are spread,
I labor patiently:
Till, thus intent on this thing and no more,
If to a vein of silver I were led,
It scarce could gladden me.
And, seeing that no joy's so warm i' the core
As this whereby the heart is comforted
And the desire set free,—
Therefore thy bitter love is still my scope,
Lady, from whom it is my life's sore theme
More painfully to sift the grains of hope
Than gold out of that stream.

One of his best sonnets is the following:

Descend, fair Pity, veiled in mortal weed;
And in thy guise my messengers be dight,
Partakers to appear of virtuous might
That Heaven hath for thy attribute decreed.
Yet thou, ere on their errand these proceed,
If Love consent, I pray, recall and cite
My spirits all astray dispersed in flight,
That so my songs be bold to sue and plead.
Then, hast thou sight of ladies' loveliness,
Thither accede, for I would have thee there,

And audience with humility entreat;
And charge my envoys, kneeling at their feet,
Their Lord and his desirings to declare:
Hear them, sweet Ladies, for their humbleness.

IV. Folgore da San Gemignano. The date to which Guiseppe Folgore is assigned by critics varies from the middle of the thirteenth century to the early years of the fourteenth, but with strong probabilities in favor of the latter. At any rate, by reason of the style of his writing and the allusions he makes to historical characters, we may class him with the circle of Dante rather than with his predecessors. Folgore's poetry is of the lightly-satirical character and free to a considerable extent from the sentimentality that was so prevalent. Several of his sonnets have been translated by Rossetti, and the remainder by Symonds. From the former we take examples from two series, one of twelve on the months of the year and the other of seven on the days of the week.

The sonnets of the months are addressed *To a Fellowship of Sienese Nobles,* a club which, though highly approved and encouraged by Folgore, was held in scorn by Dante. Mr. Cayley says of it: "A dozen extravagant youths of Siena had put together by equal contributions 216,000 florins to spend in pleasuring; they were reduced in about a twelvemonth to the extremes of poverty. It was their practice to give mutual entertainments twice a month; at each of which, three tables having

been sumptuously covered, they would feast at one, wash their hands on another, and throw the last out of window."

The dedication follows:

Unto the blithe and lordly Fellowship
(I know not where, but wheresoe'er, I know,
Lordly and blithe), be greeting; and thereto,
Dogs, hawks, and a full purse wherein to dip;
Quails struck i' the flight; nags mettled to the whip;
Hart-hounds, hare-hounds, and blood-hounds even so;
And o'er that realm, a crown for Niccolo,
Whose praise in Siena springs from lip to lip.
Tingoccio, Atuin di Togno, and Ancaian,
Bartolo and Mugaro and Faenot,
Who well might pass for children of King Ban,
Courteous and valiant more than Lancelot,—
To each, God speed! How worthy every man
To hold high tournament in Camelot.

We have the sonnets for January, May, September and November:

JANUARY

For January I give you vests of skins,
And mighty fires in hall, and torches lit;
Chambers and happy beds with all things fit;
Smooth silken sheets, rough furry counterpanes;
And sweetmeats baked; and one that deftly spins
Warms arras; and Douay cloth, and store of it;
And on this merry manner still to twit
The wind, when most his mastery the wind wins.
Or issuing forth at seasons in the day,
Ye'll fling soft handfuls of the fair white snow
Among the damsels standing round, in play:
And when you all are tired and all aglow,
Indoors again the court shall hold its sway,
And the free Fellowship continue so.

MAY

I give you horses for your games in May,
And all of them well-train'd unto the course,—
Each docile, swift, erect, a goodly horse;
With armor on their chests, and bells at play
Between their brows, and pennons fair and gay;
Fine nets, and housings meet for warriors,
Emblazon'd with the shields ye claim for yours,
Gules, argent, or, all dizzy at noonday.
And spears shall split, and fruit go flying up
In merry counterchange for wreaths that drop
From balconies and casements far above;
And tender damsels with young men and youths
Shall kiss together on the cheeks and mouths;
And every day be glad with joyful love.

SEPTEMBER

And in September, O what keen delight!
Falcons and astors, merlins, sparrowhawks;
Decoy-birds that shall lure your game in flocks;
And hounds with bells; and gauntlets stout and tight;
Wide pouches; crossbows shooting out of sight;
Arblasts and javelins; balls and ball-cases;
All birds the best to fly at; moulting these,
Those rear'd by hand; with finches mean and slight;
And for their chase, all birds the best to fly;
And each to each of you be lavish still
In gifts; and robbery find no gainsaying;
And if you meet with travelers going by,
Their purses from your purse's flow shall fill;
And avarice be the only outcast thing.

NOVEMBER

Let baths and wine-butts be November's due,
With thirty mule-loads of broad gold-pieces;
And canopy with silk the streets that freeze;
And keep your drink-horns steadily in view.
Let every trader have his gain of you:
Clareta shall your lamps and torches send,—

Caeta, citron-candies without end;
And each shall drink, and help his neighbor to.
And let the cold be great, and the fire grand:
And still for fowls, and pastries sweetly wrought,
For hares and kids, for roast and boil'd, be sure
You always have your appetites at hand;
And then let night howl and heaven fall, so nought
Be miss'd that makes a man's bed-furniture.

The dedication of the sonnets to the days of the week is as follows:

There is among my thoughts the joyous plan
To fashion a bright-jewell'd carcanet,
Which I upon such worthy brows would set,
To say, it suits them fairly as it can.
And now I have newly found a gentleman,
Of courtesies and birth commensurate,
Who better would become the imperial state
Than fits the gem within the signet's span.
Carlo di Messer Guerra Cavicciuoli,
Of him I speak,—brave, wise, of just award
And generous service, let who list command;
And lithelier limb'd than ounce or leopard.
He holds not money-bags, as children, holy;
For Lombard Este hath no freer hand.

The following are the sonnets for Thursday and Saturday:

THURSDAY

The Day of Jousts and Tournaments

For Thursday be the tournament prepared,
And gentlemen in lordly jousts compete:
First man with man together let them meet,—
By fifties and by hundreds afterward.
Let arms and housings each be fitly pair'd,
And fitly hold your battle to its heat
From the third hour to vespers, after meat;

Till the best-winded be at last declared.
Then back unto your beauties, as ye came:
Where upon sovereign beds, with wise control
Of leeches, shall your hurts be swathed in bands.
The ladies shall assist with their own hands,
And each be so well paid in seeing them
That on the morrow he be sound and whole.

SATURDAY

The Day of Hawking

I've jolliest merriment for Saturday:—
The very choicest of all hawks to fly
That crane or heron could be stricken by,
As up and down you course the steep highway.
So shall the wild geese, in your deadly play,
Lose at each stroke a wing, a tail, a thigh;
And man with man and horse with horse shall vie,
Till you all shout for glory and holiday.
Then, going home, you'll closely charge the cook:
"All this is for to-morrow's roast and stew:
Skin, lop, and truss: hang pots on every hook:
And we must have fine wine and white broad too,
Because this time we mean to feast: so look
We do not think your kitchens lost on you."

Symonds translates five sonnets which are the fragment that remains of seventeen upon the subject of knighthood. To appreciate them properly it should be remembered that in Italy the feudal system never secured as strong a hold as it did in the Western nations of Europe and that the character of the Italian knight in literature differed decidedly from that of the English and French knights. For a long period of time the old Roman idea prevented chivalry from appearing in Italy, but with the eruption of the French and the long reign of the German

Emperor the idea made some progress, principally because it was the custom of the emperors and rulers to knight large companies of men in order to secure their support either in the way of service or by actual contributions of money. We hear, for instance, that in the year 1354, when Charles IV "was advancing through the March, had crossed the Oglio and was at the borders of Cremona, in his camp upon the snow, he, sitting upon his horse, did knight the doughty and noble man, Francesco da Carrara, who had constantly attended him with a great train, and smiting him upon the neck with his palm, said: 'Be thou a good knight, and loyal to the Empire.' Thereupon the noble German peers dismounted, and forthwith buckled on Francesco's spurs. To them the Lord Francesco gave chargers and horses of the best he had."

Liberality, not to say prodigality, was one of the prime characteristics of the Italian knight, and the display and extravagance which accompanied the ceremony of investiture was limited only by the wealth and position of the man who received the accolade. While Italian knights, or cavalieri, of this period were not so famous as they later became, when the best military schools in Europe were Italian, the sonnets to which we allude show that the ideals of the best of them were quite in accord with chivalry everywhere, and it is to be regretted that the remainder of the cycle has been lost.

The youth described in these sonnets is so anxious to do credit to the order that he has mortgaged his property to get the money for the banquets and presents due on such an occasion. Through the sonnets it will be seen that Folgore no longer considers the deep religious significance of knighthood, but looks rather to the joyous side of the ceremony:

This morn a young squire shall be made a knight;
Whereof he fain would be right worthy found,
And therefore pledgeth lands and castles round
To furnish all that fits a man of might.
Meat, bread and wine he gives to many a wight;
Capons and pheasants on his board abound,
Where serving men and pages march around;
Choice chambers, torches, and wax candle light.
Barbed steeds, a multitude, are in his thought,
Mailed men at arms and noble company,
Spears, pennants, housing cloths, bells richly wrought.
Musicians following with great barony
And jesters through the land his state have brought,
With dames and damsels whereso rideth he.

After this introduction the treatment is allegorical, and the first sonnet treats of the bath, to which he is accompanied by Prowess:

Lo Prowess, who despoileth him straightway,
And saith: "Friend, now beseems it thee to strip;
For I will see men naked, thigh and hip,
And thou my will must know and eke obey;
And leave what was thy wont until this day,
And for new toil, new sweat, thy strength equip;
This do, and thou shalt join my fellowship,
If of fair deeds thou tire not nor cry nay."
And when she sees his comely body bare,
Forthwith within her arms she him doth take,

And saith: "These limbs thou yieldest to my prayer;
I do accept thee, and this gift thee make,
So that thy deeds may shine for ever fair;
My lips shall never more thy praise forsake."

After courage, modesty or humility is the quality most favored by the Italians as that which wins favor and makes popular the strong man:

Humility to him doth gently go,
And saith: "I would in no wise weary thee;
Yet must I cleanse and wash thee thoroughly,
And I will make thee whiter than the snow.
Hear what I tell thee in few words, for so
Fain am I of thy heart to hold the key;
Now must thou sail henceforward after me;
And I will guide thee as myself do go.
But one thing would I have thee straightway leave;
Well knowest thou mine enemy is pride;
Let her no more unto thy spirit cleave:
So leal a friend with thee will I abide
That favor from all folk thou shalt receive;
This grace hath he who keepeth on my side."

The vigil by night which the Teuton would keep by his arms in a church is not considered by the Italian in a serious vein:

Then did Discretion to the squire draw near,
And drieth him with a fair cloth and clean,
And straightway putteth him the sheets between,
Silk, linen, counterpane and minevere.
Think now of this! Until the day was clear,
With songs and music and delight the queen,
And with new knights, fair fellows well-beseen,
To make him perfect, gave him goodly cheer.
Then saith she: "Rise forthwith, for now 'tis due,
Thou shouldst be born into the world again;

Keep well the order thou dost take in view."
Unfathomable thoughts with him remain
Of that great bond he may no more eschew,
Nor can he say, "I'll hide me from this chain."

In the morning gladness comes and prepares him for the joyous day of investiture, and here the fragment ends:

Comes Blithesomeness with mirth and merriment,
All decked in flowers she seemeth a rose-tree;
Of linen, silk, cloth, fur, now beareth she
To the new knight a rich habiliment;
Head-gear and cap and garland flower-besprent,
So brave they were May-bloom he seemed to be;
With such a rout, so many and such glee,
That the floor shook. Then to her work she went;
And stood him on his feet in hose and shoon;
And purse and gilded girdle 'neath the fur
That drapes his goodly limbs, she buckles on;
Then bids the singers and sweet music stir,
And showeth him to ladies for a boon
And all who in that following went with her.

Folgore was also a political writer, and he indulged in satire on the acts of the people against the Guelphs and Ghibellines as well as the feebleness and effeminacy of his contemporaries.

The following is addressed to the Pisans:

Ye are more silky-sleek than ermines are,
Ye Pisan counts, knights, damozels and squires,
Who think by combing out your hair like wires
To drive the men of Florence from their car.
Ye make the Ghibellines free near and far,
Here, there, in cities, castles, huts and byres,
Seeing how gallant in your brave attires,
How bold you look, true paladins of war.

Stout-hearted are ye as a hare in chase,
To meet the sails of Genoa on the sea;
And men of Lucca never saw your face.
Dogs with a bone for courtesy are ye:
Could Folgore but gain a special grace,
He'd have you banded 'gainst all men that be.

V. Cecco Angiolieri. The man whom Rossetti describes as the prodigal or scamp of the Dantesque Circle was Cecco Angiolieri, a Sienese satirist of savage and even brutal tendency. Like Folgore, he had abandoned medieval mysticism and wrote with a bitter realism that is the forerunner from afar of the work of some of our modern authors. Neither of the two had high aspirations, and both were willing to take the world as it presented itself and to live for the mere sake of living. To quote from Symonds: "But Cecco is perverse and impious. His love has nothing delicate; his hatred is a morbid passion. At his worst or best (for his best writing is his worst feeling) we find him all but rabid. If Caligula, for instance, had written poetry, he might have piqued himself upon the following sonnet; only we must do Cecco the justice of remembering that his rage is more than half ironical and humorous:"

An I were fire, I would burn up the world;
An I were wind, with tempest I'd it break;
An I were sea, I'd drown it in a lake;
An I were God, to hell I'd have it hurled;
An I were Pope, I'd see disaster whirled
O'er Christendom, deep joy thereof to take;
An I were Emperor, I'd quickly make

All heads of all folk from their necks be twisted;
An I were death, I'd to my father go;
An I were life, forthwith from him I'd fly;
And with my mother I'd deal even so;
An I were Cecco, as I am but I,
Young girls and pretty for myself I'd hold,
But let my neighbors take the plain and old.

The following sonnets show the range of his capacity. The first is concerning Becchina, the shoemaker's daughter:

Why, if Becchina's heart were diamond,
And all the other parts of her were steel,
As cold to love as snows when they congeal
In lands to which the sun may not get round;
And if her father were a giant crown'd
And not a donkey born to stitching shoes;
Or I were but an ass myself;—to use
Such harshness, scarce could to her praise redound.
Yet if she'd only for a minute hear,
And I could speak if only pretty well,
I'd let her know that I'm her happiness;
That I'm her life should also be made clear,
With other things that I've no need to tell;
And then I feel quite sure she'd answer Yes.

The next sonnet is a description of Becchina in a rage:

When I behold Becchina in a rage,
Just like a little lad I trembling stand
Whose master tells him to hold out his hand:
Had I a lion's heart, the sight would wage
Such war against it, that in that sad stage
I'd wish my birth might never have been plann'd,
And curse the day and hour that I was bann'd
With such a plague for my life's heritage.
Yet even if I should sell me to the Fiend,

I must so manage matters in some way
That for her rage I may not care a fig;
Or else from death I cannot long be screen'd.
So I'll blink the fact, but plainly say
It's time I got my valor to grow big.

The following is addressed to his father, Messer Angiolieri:

If I'd a sack of florins, and all new
(Pack'd tight together, freshly-coin'd and fine),
And Arcidosso and Montegiovi mine,
And quite a glut of eagle-pieces too,—
It were but as three farthings to my view
Without Becchina. Why then all these plots
To whip me, daddy? Now for instance, what's
The sin of all the Saracens to you?
For I protest (or may I be struck dead!)
My love's so firmly planted in its place,
Whipping nor hanging now could change the grain.
And if you want my reason on this head,
It is that whoso looks her in the face,
Though he were old, gets back his youth again.

The following shows his attitude toward his four tormentors:

I'm caught, like any thrush the nets surprise,
By Daddy and Becchina, Mammy and Love.
As to my father, let thus much suffice,—
Each day he damns me, and each hour thereof:
Becchina wants so much of all that's nice,
Not Mahomet himself could yield enough:
And Love still sets me doting in a trice
On trulls who'd seem the Ghetto's proper stuff.
My mother don't do much because she can't,
But I may count it just as good as done,
Knowing the way and not the will's her want.
To-day I tried a kiss with her—just one—
To see if I could make her sulks avaunt;
She said, "The devil rip you up, my son!"

The reckless, irreverent and unfilial attitude toward his father, whom he blames for a poverty that had at last driven him to take refuge in a religious house under the name of Brother Henry, is shown in this sonnet:

Let not the inhabitants of Hell despair,
For one's got out who seem'd to be lock'd in;
And Cecco's the poor devil that I mean,
Who thought for ever and ever to be there.
But the leaf's turn'd at last, and I declare
That now my state of glory doth begin;
For Messer Angiolieri's slipp'd his skin,
Who plagued me, Summer and Winter, many a year.
Make haste to Cecco, sonnet, with a will,
To him who no more at the Abbey dwells;
Tell him that Brother Henry's half dried up.
He'll never more be down-at-mouth, but fill
His beak at his own beck, till his life swells
To more than Enoch's or Elijah's scope.

CARTHUSIAN MONASTERY NEAR FLORENCE

CHAPTER IX

THE FIRST PERIOD (CONTINUED)
1100–1475

PETRARCH

BIOGRAPHY. Petrarch was born on the very day in the year 1304 that his father and Dante, members of the Bianchi, were trying to fight their way back into Florence, their native city, from which they had been banished. Pietro, the poet's father, was familiarly called Petracco (Little Peter), and from this surname the poet Francesco derived his name Petrarca, or in the form we best know it, Petrarch. The mother was living in Arezzo, an ancient city of Tuscany, at the time of her son's birth, because, though not herself banished, she had followed the fortunes of her husband. During the poet's infancy the family was extremely poor, and the father, proscribed and under severe sentence, was compelled to

separate himself from his family in order to earn the means of supporting them.

Petrarch passed through the perils incident to a poverty-stricken and wandering existence, with a few narrow escapes from death and much suffering from privation, although his father provided instruction of the highest kind obtainable and sought in every way to prepare his brilliant child for a successful career in the law, his own profession. In 1312 the family went to Avignon, which was then the Papal seat, and Francesco seriously entered upon the study of law, though his refined tastes and poetic temperament early developed a passionate admiration for classic literature, in which Cicero and Vergil were his chief models, for he knew no Greek. Here he contracted a warm friendship with Guido Settimo, a youth of about his own age, and the two found themselves so companionable that their intimacy extended through life.

At fifteen Petrarch entered the University of Montpelier, where he remained for four years, taking lectures under the most noted professors of law. But then, having made little progress in legal education, Petrarch was removed by his father to Bologna, where, with his brother Gherardo and his inseparable friend Guido, the father thought his son could be taught to look with enthusiasm upon a profession that grew daily more trying. However, at this time Petrarch met a number of accomplished men, among them Cino da

Pistoia, whose influence must have been considerable in forming his judgment.

While at Bologna he received the sad news of his mother's death in the humble retirement, where, beautiful and virtuous in a corrupt world, no taint of calumny ever had been heard against her. Shortly after, his father died, and the brothers returned to Bologna, only to find their affairs in great disorder and their property largely dissipated by dishonest executors of Petracco's will.

Petrarch at twenty-two was a strikingly-handsome young man, with graceful and distinguished carriage, sprightly in conversation, with an uncommonly musical voice, and then, as afterwards, from all that can be learned, one of the most attractive and fascinating men that ever lived. In Avignon, where he now took up his residence, he found a licentious and profligate court, into the mad pleasures of which he entered very much as any young man of his years might have done, but it does not seem that his excesses were the result of deliberate plans. At any rate, he reached nearly the end of his twenty-third year without having seriously known the passion of love, when, as he himself has told us, on the sixth of April, 1327, in the church of St. Clara he first met Laura, a lady a little younger than himself, in a green mantle sprinkled with violets, on which her golden hair fell plaited in tresses. The sudden impression made by her beauty and her proud

and delicate carriage was so strong that it was never effaced, and from that moment she became the inspiration of his life.

Much discussion has taken place concerning Laura; some critics regard her merely as an allegorical figure, a personification of the poet's ideals, but others, with better reason, are convinced that she was a very real person; and on the latter basis she has been variously identified, now as a Laura de Sade, born in 1308, now as a member of the Colonna family. Laura, at any rate, seems to have been the virtuous mother of a large family and lived without flagrant scandal despite the notoriety of Petrarch's love and the publicity which his scores of sonnets, read throughout Italy, gave to her name. It seems difficult to consider Laura as anything but a kind-hearted, lovable woman, who may have been somewhat flattered by the devotion of the most famous and fascinating man of his age, but who kept him at his proper distance and held her character unblemished in spite of appeals, which in the sonnets indicate that the love of Petrarch was not altogether platonic. As a matter of course, different writers deal differently with this subject, and much uncertainty surrounds the whole matter, but, whatever may have been the facts, Laura remained the one great influence in his after-life, although she died in 1348 and Petrarch survived her twenty-six years.

There are several biographies of Petrarch; to an important one in English by the poet

Thomas Campbell we are indebted for most of this sketch. In 1337 a son was born to him from a mistress whom he had in Avignon, and who afterwards bore him a daughter. Petrarch recognized his relationship to these children and to several others that were born to him, although in his poetic writings there are few references to them, his only inspiration appearing to be the idealized love for Laura, which, however, did not stand in the way of the gratification of his passions.

As was a not infrequent practice of indigent men of letters of the time, Petrarch, to secure a benefice, took the first three of the holy orders, although he never abandoned his practice of literature or his habits of study and investigation. One of the most learned men of his time, he added to his fame as a poet his remarkable reputation as an authority upon many subjects, and particularly upon the classics, in the revival of the study of which he was the most prominent figure.

If we give more space to the biography of Petrarch than to that of Dante, it is not because he was the greater man, but because his influence upon Italian literature was infinitely more powerful. Dante was a figure apart; he stood alone in a glow of spirituality that in itself was sufficient to prevent his being a great leader among common people. Petrarch was much more human, his foibles were more prominent, his thirst for patronage, publicity and fame much stronger, and his acquaintance with

humanity much wider. By 1340 he sought to be declared Poet Laureate and to have placed upon his head the laurel crown which had distinguished Vergil and other great Latin writers. After an examination by the King of Naples, who reported favorably upon his candidacy, Petrarch went from Naples to Rome and there received his coronation, of which we take the following description, from Campbell:

The morning of the 8th of April, 1341, was ushered in by the sound of trumpets; and the people, ever fond of a show, came from all quarters to see the ceremony. Twelve youths selected from the best families of Rome, and clothed in scarlet, opened the procession, repeating as they went some verses, composed by the poet, in honor of the Roman people. They were followed by six citizens of Rome, clothed in green, and bearing crowns wreathed with different flowers. Petrarch walked in the midst of them; after him came the senator, accompanied by the first men of the council. The streets were strewed with flowers, and the windows filled with ladies, dressed in the most splendid manner, who showered perfumed waters profusely on the poet. He all the time wore the robe that had been presented to him by the King of Naples. When they reached the Capitol, the trumpets were silent, and Petrarch, having made a short speech, in which he quoted a verse from Vergil, cried out three times, "Long live the Roman people! long live the Senators! may God preserve their liberty!" At the conclusion of these words, he knelt before the senator Orso, who, taking a crown of laurel from his own head, placed it on that of Petrarch, saying, "This crown is the reward of virtue." The poet then repeated a sonnet in praise of the ancient Romans. The people testified their approbation by shouts of applause, crying, "Long flourish the Capitol and the

poet!'' The friends of Petrarch shed tears of joy, and Stefano Colonna, his favorite hero, addressed the assembly in his honor.

The ceremony having been finished at the Capitol, the procession, amidst the sound of trumpets and the acclamations of the people, repaired thence to the church of St. Peter, where Petrarch offered up his crown of laurel before the altar. The same day the Count of Anguillara caused letters patent to be delivered to Petrarch, in which the senators, after a flattering preamble, declared that he had merited the title of a great poet and historian; that, to mark his distinction, they had put upon his head a laurel crown, not only by the authority of King Robert, but by that of the Roman Senate and people; and that they gave him, at Rome and elsewhere, the privilege to read, to dispute, to explain ancient books, to make new ones, to compose poems, and to wear a crown according to his choice, either of laurel, beech, or myrtle, as well as the poetic habit.

In 1347 he visited his brother, who had entered a Carthusian monastery, and thereafter determined to leave Avignon and return to Italy to spend the remainder of his life. Before he left, he went to take leave of Laura, whom he found at an assembly which she frequently visited. She was plainly dressed, without pearls, garlands or any gay color, and, though not melancholy, she did not appear to have her usual cheerfulness and was serious and thoughtful, with an air more touching than usual, as though she feared an evil not yet arrived. Petrarch says: "She was seated among those ladies who are generally her companions, and appeared like a beautiful rose surrounded by flowers smaller and less bloom-

ing. . . . In taking leave of her, I sought in her looks for a consolation of her own sufferings. Her eyes had an expression which I had never seen in them before. What I saw in her face seemed to predict the sorrows that threatened me."

The memorable plague that spread its devastation over the whole world reached Italy early in 1348, and among the many of whom it deprived Petrarch was his Laura, who passed away on the first of April. Upon his copy of Vergil he inscribed the following marginal note, which is one of the most definite statements we have concerning her.

Laura, illustrious for her virtues, and for a long time celebrated in my verses, for the first time appeared to my eyes on the 6th of April, 1327, in the church of St. Clara, at the first hour of the day. I was then in my youth. In the same city, and at the same hour, in the year 1348, this luminary disappeared from our world. I was then at Verona, ignorant of my wretched situation. Her chaste and beautiful body was buried the same day, after vespers, in the church of the Cordeliers. Her soul returned to its native mansion in heaven. I have written this with a pleasure mixed with bitterness, to retrace the melancholy remembrance of "MY GREAT LOSS." This loss convinces me that I have nothing now left worth living for, since the strongest cord of my life is broken. By the grace of God, I shall easily renounce a world where my hopes have been vain and perishing. It is time for me to fly from Babylon when the knot that bound me to it is untied.

We have a large collection of Petrarch's letters, some of which are exceedingly interesting, but from which we can make only a few ex-

tracts. In 1350 he writes to Boccaccio concerning an accident that came near resulting seriously:

"On the 15th of October we left Bolsena, a little town scarcely known at present; but interesting from having been anciently one of the principal places in Etruria. Occupied with the hopes of seeing Rome in five days, I reflected on the changes in our modes of thinking which are made by the course of years. Fourteen years ago I repaired to the great city from sheer curiosity to see its wonders. The second time I came was to receive the laurel. My third and fourth journey had no object but to render services to my persecuted friends. My present visit ought to be more happy, since its only object is my eternal salvation." It appears, however, that the horses of the travelers had no such devotional feelings: "for," he continues, "whilst my mind was full of these thoughts, the horse of the old abbot, which was walking upon my left, kicking at my horse, struck me upon the leg, just below the knee. The blow was so violent that it sounded as if a bone was broken. My attendants came up. I felt an acute pain, which made me, at first, desirous of stopping; but, fearing the dangerousness of the place, I made a virtue of necessity, and went on to Viterbo, where we arrived very late on the 16th of October. Three days afterwards they dragged me to Rome with much trouble. As soon as I arrived at Rome, I called for doctors, who found the bone laid bare. It was not, however, thought to be broken; though the shoe of the horse had left its impression."

In 1351 his interest in Venetian affairs caused him to write the following letter to the Doge Andrea Dandolo, and though it produced no effect, yet the Doge complimented the poet highly on its production and said that it

could only emanate from a mind inspired with a divine spirit:

My love for my country forces me to break silence; the goodness of your character encourages me. Can I hold my peace whilst I hear the symptoms of a coming storm that menaces my beloved country? Two puissant people are flying to arms; two flourishing cities are agitated by the approach of war. These cities are placed by nature like the two eyes of Italy; the one in the south and west, and the other in the east and north, to dominate over the two seas that surround them; so that, even after the destruction of the Roman Empire, this beautiful country was still regarded as the queen of the world. I know that proud nations denied her the empire of the land, but who dared ever to dispute with her the Empire of the sea?

I shudder to think of our prospects. If Venice and Genoa turn their victorious arms against each other, it is all over with us; we lose our glory and the command of the sea. In this calamity we shall have a consolation which we have ever had, namely, that if our enemies rejoice in our calamities, they cannot at least derive any glory from them.

In great affairs I have always dreaded the counsels of the young. Youthful ignorance and inexperience have been the ruin of many empires. I, therefore, learn with pleasure that you have named a council of elders, to whom you have confided this affair. I expected no less than this from your wisdom, which is far beyond your years.

The state of your Republic distresses me. I know the difference that there is between the tumult of arms and the tranquillity of Parnassus. I know that the sounds of Apollo's lyre accord but ill with the trumpets of Mars; but if you have abandoned Parnassus, it has been only to fulfill the duties of a good citizen and of a vigilant chief. I am persuaded, at the same time, that in the midst of arms you think of peace; that you would regard

it as a triumph for yourself, and the greatest blessing you could procure for your country. Did not Hannibal himself say that a sure peace was more valuable than a hoped-for victory! If truth has extorted this confession from the most warlike man that ever lived, is it not plain that a pacific man ought to prefer peace even to a certain victory? Who does not know that peace is the greatest of blessings, and that war is the source of all evils?

Do not deceive yourself; you have to deal with a keen people who know not what it is to be conquered. Would it not be better to transfer the war to Damascus, to Susa, or to Memphis? Think besides, that those whom you are going to attack are your brothers. At Thebes, of old, two brothers fought to their mutual destruction. Must Italy renew, in our days, so atrocious a spectacle?

Let us examine what may be the results of this war. Whether you are conqueror or are conquered, one of the eyes of Italy will necessarily be blinded, and the other much weakened; for it would be folly to flatter yourself with the hopes of conquering so strong an enemy without much effusion of blood.

Brave men, powerful people! (I speak here to both of you) what is your object—to what do you aspire? What will be the end of your dissensions? It is not the blood of the Carthaginians or the Numantians that you are about to spill, but it is Italian blood; the blood of a people who would be the first to start up and offer to expend their blood, if any barbarous nation were to attempt a new irruption among us. In that event, their bodies would be the bucklers and ramparts of our common country; they would live, or they would die with us. Ought the pleasure of avenging a slight offense to carry more weight with you than the public good and your own safety? Let revenge be the delight of women. Is it not more glorious for men to forget an injury than to avenge it? to pardon an enemy than to destroy him?

If my feeble voice could make itself heard among those grave men who compose your council, I am persuaded that you would not only *not* reject the peace which is

offered to you, but go to meet and embrace it closely, so that it might not escape you. Consult your wise old men who love the Republic; they will speak the same language to you that I do.

You, my lord, who are at the head of the council, and who govern your Republic, ought to recollect that the glory or the shame of these events will fall principally on you. Raise yourself above yourself; look into, examine everything with attention. Compare the success of the war with the evils which it brings in its train. Weigh in a balance the good effects and the evil, and you will say with Hannibal, that an hour is sufficient to destroy the work of many years.

The renown of your country is more ancient than is generally believed. Several ages before the city of Venice was built, I find not only the name of the Venetians famous, but also that of one of their dukes. Would you submit to the caprices of fortune a glory acquired for so long a time, and at so great a cost? You will render a great service to your Republic, if, preferring her safety to her glory, you give her incensed and insane populace prudent and useful counsels, instead of offering them brilliant and specious projects. The wise say that we cannot purchase a virtue more precious than what is bought at the expense of glory. If you adopt this axiom, your character will be handed down to posterity, like that of the Duke of the Venetians, to whom I have alluded. All the world will admire and love you.

To conceal nothing from you, I confess that I have heard with grief of your league with the King of Arragon. What! shall Italians go and implore succor of barbarous kings to destroy Italians? You will say, perhaps, that your enemies have set you the example. My answer is, that they are equally culpable. According to report, Venice, in order to satiate her rage, calls to her aid tyrants of the west; whilst Genoa brings in those of the east. This is the source of our calamities. Carried away by the admiration of strange things, despising, I know not why, the good things which we find in our own

climate, we sacrifice sound Italian faith to barbarian perfidy. Madmen that we are, we seek among venal souls that which we could find among our own brethren.

Nature has given us for barriers the Alps and the two seas. Avarice, envy and pride have opened these natural defenses to the Cimbri, the Huns, the Goths, the Gauls and the Spaniards. How often have we recited the words of Vergil:—

> "Impius haec tam culta novalia miles habebit,
> Barbarus has segetes."

Athens and Lacedemon had between them a species of rivalship similar to yours: but their forces were not by any means so nearly balanced. Lacedemon had an advantage over Athens, which put it in the power of the former to destroy her rival, if she had wished it; but she replied, "God forbid that I should put out one of the eyes of Greece!" If this beautiful sentiment came from a people whom Plato reproaches with their avidity for conquest and dominion, what still softer reply ought we not to expect from the most modest of nations!

Amidst the movements which agitate you, it is impossible for me to be tranquil. When I see one party cutting down trees to construct vessels, and others sharpening their swords and darts, I should think myself guilty if I did not seize my pen, which is my only weapon, to counsel peace. I am aware with what circumspection we ought to speak to our superiors; but the love of our country has no superior. If it should carry me beyond bounds, it will serve as my excuse before you, and oblige you to pardon me.

Throwing myself at the feet of the chiefs of two nations who are going to war, I say to them, with tears in my eyes, "Throw away your arms; give one another the embrace of peace! unite your hearts and your colors. By this means the ocean and the Euxine shall be open to you. Your ships will arrive in safety at Taprobane, at the Fortunate Isles, at Thule, and even at the poles. The kings and their people will meet you with respect; the

PETRARCH
1304–1374

Indian, the Englishman, the Aethiopian, will dread you. May peace reign among you, and may you have nothing to fear!'' Adieu! greatest of dukes, and best of men!

Much of his time he passed in retirement at Vaucluse, and one autumn he described his manner of life in a letter which he wrote to his friend Francesco Nelli, whom classically he styled Simonides:

I make war upon my body, which I regard as my enemy. My eyes, that have made me commit so many follies, are well fixed on a safe object. They look only on a woman who is withered, dark, and sunburnt. Her soul, however, is as white as her complexion is black, and she has the air of being so little conscious of her own appearance, that her homeliness may be said to become her. She passes whole days in the open fields, when the grasshoppers can scarcely endure the sun. Her tanned hide braves the heats of the dog-star, and, in the evening, she arrives as fresh as if she had just risen from bed. She does all the work of my house, besides taking care of her husband and children and attending my guests. She seems occupied with everybody but herself. At night she sleeps on vine-branches; she eats only black bread and roots, and drinks water and vinegar. If you were to give her anything more delicate, she would be the worse for it: such is the force of habit.

Though I have still two fine suits of clothes, I never wear them. If you saw me, you would take me for a laborer or a shepherd, though I was once so tasteful in my dress. The times are changed; the eyes which I wished to please are now shut; and, perhaps, even if they were opened, they would not now have the same empire over me.

In another letter from Vaucluse, he says:

I rise at midnight; I go out at break of day; I study in the fields as in my library; I read, I write, I dream;

I struggle against indolence, luxury, and pleasure. I wander all day among the arid mountains, the fresh valleys, and the deep caverns. I walk much on the banks of the Sorgue, where I meet no one to distract me. I recall the past, I deliberate on the future; and, in this contemplation, I find a resource against my solitude.

In 1357 he was living near a Carthusian monastery about three miles from Milan, whither he came at the invitation of Giovanni Visconti; from this agreeable solitude he wrote as follows to his friend Settimo:

The course of my life has always been uniform ever since the frost of age has quenched the ardor of my youth, and particularly that fatal flame which so long tormented me. But what do I say? It is a celestial dew which has produced this extinction. Though I have often changed my place of abode, I have always led nearly the same kind of life. What it is, none knows better than yourself. I once lived beside you for two years. Call to mind how I was then occupied, and you will know my present occupations. You understand me so well that you ought to be able to guess, not only what I am doing, but what I am dreaming.

Like a traveler, I am quickening my steps in proportion as I approach the term of my course. I read and write night and day; the one occupation refreshes me from the fatigue of the other. These are my employments—these are my pleasures. My tasks increase upon my hands; one begets another; and I am dismayed when I look at what I have undertaken to accomplish in so short a space as the remainder of my life. . . . My health is good; my body is so robust that neither ripe years, nor grave occupations, nor abstinence, nor penance, can totally subdue that kicking ass on whom I am constantly making war. I count upon the grace of Heaven, without which I should infallibly fall, as I fell in other times. All my reliance is on Christ. With re-

gard to my fortune, I am exactly in a just mediocrity, equally distant from the two extremes. . . . .

I inhabit a retired corner of the city towards the west. Their ancient devotion attracts the people every Sunday to the church of St. Ambrosio, near which I dwell. During the rest of the week, this quarter is a desert.

Fortune has changed nothing in my nourishment, or my hours of sleep, except that I retrench as much as possible from indulgence in either. I lie in bed for no other purpose than to sleep, unless I am ill. I hasten from bed as soon as I am awake, and pass into my library. This takes place about the middle of the night, save when the nights are shortest. I grant to Nature nothing but what she imperatively demands, and which it is impossible to refuse her.

Though I have always loved solitude and silence, I am a great gossip with my friends, which arises, perhaps, from my seeing them but rarely. I atone for this loquacity by a year of taciturnity. I mutely recall my parted friends by correspondence. I resemble that class of people of whom Seneca speaks, who seize life in detail, and not by the gross. The moment I feel the approach of summer, I take a country-house a league distant from town, where the air is extremely pure. In such a place I am at present, and here I lead my wonted life, more free than ever from the wearisomeness of the city. I have abundance of everything; the peasants vie with each other in bringing me fruit, fish, ducks, and all sorts of game. There is a beautiful Carthusian monastery in my neighborhood, where, at all hours of the day, I find the innocent pleasures which religion offers. In this sweet retreat I feel no want but that of my ancient friends. In these I was once rich; but death has taken away some of them, and absence robs me of the remainder. Though my imagination represents them, still I am not the less desirous of their real presence. There would remain but few things for me to desire, if fortune would restore to me but two friends, such as you and Socrates. I confess that I flattered myself a long time to have had you

both with me. But, if you persist in your rigor, I must console myself with the company of my religionists. Their conversation, it is true, is neither witty nor profound, but it is simple and pious. Those good priests will be of great service to me both in life and death. I think I have now said enough about myself, and, perhaps, more than enough. You ask me about the state of my fortune, and you wish to know whether you may believe the rumors that are abroad about my riches. It is true that my income is increased; but so, also, proportionably, is my outlay. I am, as I have always been, neither rich nor poor. Riches, they say, make men poor by multiplying their wants and desires; for my part, I feel the contrary; the more I have the less I desire. Yet, I suppose, if I possessed great riches, they would have the same effect upon me as upon other people.

You ask news about my son. I know not very well what to say concerning him. His manners are gentle, and the flower of his youth holds out a promise, though what fruit it may produce I know not. I think I may flatter myself that he will be an honest man. He has talent; but what avails talent without study! He flies from a book as he would from a serpent. Persuasions, caresses, and threats are all thrown away upon him as incitements to study. I have nothing wherewith to reproach myself; and I shall be satisfied if he turns out an honest man, as I hope he will. Themistocles used to say that he liked a man without letters better than letters without a man.

From a letter dated on the 5th of January, 1372, and addressed to Matthieu de Long, the archdeacon of Liege, the last of his surviving friends from Avignon, we make the following extract, which gives a picture of his condition and the life which he led:

You ask about my condition—it is this. I am, thanks to God, sufficiently tranquil, and free, unless I deceive

myself, from all the passions of my youth. I enjoyed good health for a long time, but for two years past I have become infirm. Frequently, those around me have believed me dead, but I live still, and pretty much the same as you have known me. I could have mounted higher; but I wished not to do so, since every elevation is suspicious. I have acquired many friends and a good many books: I have lost my health and many friends; I have spent some time at Venice. At present I am at Padua, where I perform the functions of canon. I esteem myself happy to have quitted Venice, on account of that war which has been declared between that Republic and the Lord of Padua. At Venice I should have been suspected: here I am caressed. I pass the greater part of the year in the country, which I always prefer to the town. I repose, I write, I think; so you see that my way of life and my pleasures are the same as in my youth. Having studied so long, it is astonishing that I have learnt so little. I hate nobody, I envy nobody. In that first season of life which is full of error and presumption, I despised all the world except myself. In middle life, I despised only myself. In my aged years, I despise all the world, and myself most of all. I fear only those whom I love. I desire only a good end. I dread a company of valets like a troop of robbers. I should have none at all, if my age and weakness permitted me. I am fain to shut myself up in concealment, for I cannot endure visits; it is an honor which displeases and wears me out. Amidst the Euganean hills I have built a small but neat mansion, where I reckon on passing quietly the rest of my days, having always before my eyes my dead or absent friends. To conceal nothing from you, I have been sought after by the Pope, the Emperor, and the King of France, who have given me pressing invitations, but I have constantly declined them, preferring my liberty to everything.

Petrarch died during the night of the 18th to the 19th of July, 1374. Early biographers

pretend that when he breathed his last several persons saw a white cloud like the smoke of incense rise to the ceiling of his chamber, where it stopped for a time and then vanished, an evidence, these zealous biographers say, that his soul was acceptable to God and had ascended to Heaven. Manzini, however, says that some of Petrarch's people, entering his library, saw him sitting at the table with his head reclining on a book. Having often seen him in this attitude, it was some little time before they discovered that life had passed away. One of his intimate friends assigns the cause to apoplexy. The news of his death made a deep impression upon Italians everywhere, and people in the vicinity of Padua hastened in crowds to pay reverence to the man who had so honored his country. Nobles, Church dignitaries and the common people flocked together to share in the general mourning. Campbell continues:

The body of Petrarch, clad in red satin, which was the dress of the canons of Padua, supported by sixteen doctors on a bier covered with cloth of gold bordered with ermine, was carried to the parish church of Arqua, which was fitted up in a manner suitable to the ceremony. After the funeral oration had been pronounced by Bonaventura da Praga, of the order of the hermits of St. Augustin, the corpse was interred in a chapel which Petrarch himself had erected in the parish church in honor of the Virgin. A short time afterwards, Francesco Brossano, having caused a tomb of marble to be raised on four pillars opposite to the same church, transferred the body to that spot, and engraved over it an epitaph in

some bad Latin lines, the rhyming of which is their greatest merit. In the year 1637, Paul Valdezucchi, proprietor of the house and grounds of Petrarch at Arqua, caused a bust of bronze to be placed above his mausoleum.

Boccaccio, who always spoke of Petrarch as his master, acknowledged the receipt of a small legacy in the following letter:

My first impulse, on hearing of the decease of my master, was to have hastened to his tomb to bid him my last adieu, and to mix my tears with yours. But ever since I lectured in public on the Divina Commedia of Dante, which is now ten months, I have suffered under a malady which has so weakened and changed me, that you would not recognize me. I have totally lost the stoutness and complexion which I had when you saw me at Venice. My leanness is extreme, my sight is dim, my hands shake, and my knees totter, so that I can hardly drag myself to my country-house at Certaldo, where I only languish. After reading your letter, I wept a whole night for my dear master, not on his own account, for his piety permits us not to doubt that he is now happy, but for myself and for his friends whom he has left in this world, like a vessel in a stormy sea without a pilot. By my own grief I judge of yours, and of that of Tullia, my beloved sister, your worthy spouse. I envy Arqua the happiness of holding deposited in her soil him whose heart was the abode of the Muses, and the sanctuary of philosophy and eloquence. That village, scarcely known to Padua, will henceforth be famed throughout the world. Men will respect it like Mount Pausilippo for containing the ashes of Vergil, the shore of the Euxine for possessing the tomb of Ovid, and Smyrna for its being believed to be the burial-place of Homer.

II. The Writings of Petrarch. The writings of Petrarch are in two groups, the first

written in Latin and the second in Italian. It was through his Latin epic *Africa* that he received the laurel crown, and anticipating fame from his Latin works, he was inclined to look slightingly upon his Italian verse. But the *Canzoniere* of Petrarch was for centuries the model of lyric writings, and has won an assured position in world literature. Among his classic writings are his letters, to which we have previously alluded, but his Latin writings as a whole constitute one of the greatest single influences in the production of the movement which has been called the Renaissance. They secured renewed attention to the classics among the cultivated Italians of his day, and because of this work he enjoys the distinction of having been the first man after the Dark Ages who wrote in classic language. He was himself an indefatigable collector of Latin manuscripts and in the pursuit of them traveled extensively throughout France, Germany, Italy and Southern Spain. When he could not secure them otherwise, he was known repeatedly to copy them with his own hand, and although the greater part of his library was lost, still many volumes have been preserved, and modern writers are indebted to him for much information concerning others.

His poems will never lose their interest nor the beauty of their affecting melody. Besides, to use the words of Campbell, Petrarch shows "intellectual graces of thought and spiritual felicities of diction, without which his tactics

in the mere march of words would be a worthless skill." By lyrics here we mean the *Rime* or *Canzoniere* in honor of Laura, which consists of sonnets, canzoni and madrigals in two groups, the first of which is addressed *To Laura in Life,* the second *To Laura in Death.* The average reader would be impressed by seeming monotony in these lyrics, but a careful study of them and a frequent reading would show, if we may believe the testimony of all who have so studied Petrarch, a wonderful variety and an ever-increasing beauty in thought and in expression.

Besides the *Rime* proper, there are five lyrics which the poet calls *Triumphs,* namely, the *Triumph of Love, Of Chastity, Of Death, Of Fame* and *Of Eternity.* His idea in these is that Love triumphs over Life, and that successively each of the others triumphs over its predecessor until at last Eternity triumphs over all.

Modern critics divide themselves into two classes, as they favor the writings of Dante or of Petrarch, and accordingly, the two great poets are rated differently by different writers. Ugo Foscolo, a gifted Italian writer and a vehement supporter of Dante, finds time, however, to write as follows of Petrarch:

> The harmony, elegance, and perfection of his poetry are the result of long labor; but its original conceptions and pathos always sprang from the sudden inspiration of a deep and powerful passion. By an attentive perusal of all the writings of Petrarch, it may be reduced almost

to a certainty that, by dwelling perpetually on the same ideas, and by allowing his mind to prey incessantly on itself, the whole train of his feelings and reflections acquired one strong character and tone, and, if he was ever able to suppress them for a time, they returned to him with increased violence; that, to tranquillize this agitated state of his mind, he, in the first instance, communicated in a free and loose manner all that he thought and felt, in his correspondence with his intimate friends; that he afterwards reduced these narratives, with more order and description, into Latin verse; and that he, lastly, perfected them with a greater profusion of imagery and more art in his Italian poetry, the composition of which at first served only, as he frequently says, to divert and mitigate all his afflictions. We may thus understand the perfect concord which prevails in Petrarch's poetry between Nature and Art; between the accuracy of fact and the magic of invention; between depth and perspicuity; between devouring passion and calm meditation. It is precisely because the poetry of Petrarch originally sprang from the heart that his passion never seems fictitious or cold, notwithstanding the metaphysical elevation of his thoughts.

A recent writer, Richard Garnett, says: "It is noteworthy that Petrarch does not appear as the representative poet of the medieval or of any other period. Horace and Ovid would have admired him as much as his contemporaries did, and he is as fresh and bright in the nineteenth as in the fourteenth century. Many have pursued him, none have overtaken him. . . . He could not have been the literary sovereign of his age had he been very greatly in advance of it. He looked down upon it sufficiently to dislike it, as he tells us, and prepare a better."

III. SELECTIONS FROM PETRARCH. The first sonnet, which, by the way, was one of the last written, is a pleasing example of calm reflection:

Ye who shall hear amidst my scatter'd lays
The sighs with which I fann'd and fed my heart,
When, young and glowing, I was but in part
The man I am become in later days;
Ye who have mark'd the changes of my style
From vain despondency to hope as vain,
From him among you, who has felt love's pain,
I hope for pardon, ay, and pity's smile,
Though conscious, now, my passion was a theme,
Long, idly dwelt on by the public tongue,
I blush for all the vanities I've sung,
And find the world's applause a fleeting dream.
—*Campbell's Translation.*

A sonnet characteristic of Petrarch in his homage to beauty is the following:

In what ideal world or part of heaven
Did Nature find the model of that face
And form, so fraught with loveliness and grace,
In which, to our creation, she has given
Her prime proof of creative power above?
What fountain nymph or goddess ever let
Such lovely tresses float of gold refined
Upon the breeze, or in a single mind,
Where have so many virtues ever met,
E'en though those charms have slain my bosom's weal?
He knows not love who has not seen her eyes
Turn when she sweetly speaks, or smiles, or sighs,
Or how the power of love can hurt or heal.
—*Campbell's Translation.*

The following is remarkable for the exquisitely-appropriate figure with which it closes:

Time was her tresses by the breathing air
Were wreathed to many a ringlet golden bright,
Time was her eyes diffused unmeasured light,
Though now their lovely beams are waxing rare,
Her face methought that in its blushes show'd
Compassion, her angelic shape and walk,
Her voice that seem'd with Heaven's own speech to talk;
At these, what wonder that my bosom glow'd!
A living sun she seem'd—a spirit of heaven.
Those charms decline: but does my passion? No!
I love not less—the slackening of the bow
Assuages not the wound its shaft has given.
—*Campbell's Translation.*

The following, inviting Stephen Colonna, one of Petrarch's patrons, to visit him in the country, is a graceful tribute:

Glorious Colonna! still the strength and stay
Of our best hopes, and the great Latin name.
Whom power could never from the true right way
Seduce by flattery or by terror tame:
No palace, theaters, nor arches here,
But, in their stead, the fir, the beech, and pine
On the green sward, with the fair mountain near
Paced to and fro by poet friend of thine;
Thus unto heaven the soul from earth is caught;
While Philomel, who sweetly to the shade
The livelong night her desolate lot complains,
Fills the soft heart with many an amorous thought:
—Ah! why is so rare good imperfect made
While severed from us still my lord remains.
—*MacGregor's Translation.*

The next sonnet was written to congratulate Boccaccio on his return to the right path:

Than me more joyful never reach'd the shore
A vessel, by the winds long tost and tried,

Whose crew, late hopeless on the waters wide,
To a good God their thanks, now prostrate, pour;
Nor captive from his dungeon ever tore,
Around whose neck the noose of death was tied,
More glad than me, that weapon laid aside
Which to my lord hostility long bore.
All ye who honor love in poet strain,
To the good minstrel of the amorous lay
Return due praise, though once he went astray;
For greater glory is, in Heaven's blest reign,
Over one sinner saved, and higher praise,
Than e'en for ninety-nine of perfect ways.

—*MacGregor's Translation.*

The poet was profoundly affected by his visits to Rome; but though prompted to tear himself away from Laura, he finds himself unable to do so:

The solemn aspect of this sacred shore
Wakes for the misspent past my bitter sighs;
"Pause, wretched man! and turn," as conscience cries,
Pointing the heavenward way where I should soar.
But soon another thought gets mastery o'er
The first, that so to palter were unwise;
E'en now the time, if memory err not, flies,
When we should wait our lady-love before.
I, for his aim then well I apprehend,
Within me freeze, as one who, sudden, hears
News unexpected which his soul offend.
Returns my first thought then, that disappears;
Nor know I which shall conquer, but till now
Within me they contend, nor hope of rest allow!

—*MacGregor's Translation.*

Having confessed his errors, he throws himself on the mercy of God:

Evil by custom, as by nature frail,
I am so wearied with the long disgrace,

That much I dread my fainting in the race
Should let th' original enemy prevail.
Once an Eternal Friend, that heard my cries,
Came to my rescue, glorious in his might,
Arm'd with all-conquering love, then took his flight,
That I in vain pursued Him with my eyes.
But his dear words, yet sounding, sweetly say,
"O ye that faint with travel, see the way!
Hopeless of other refuge, come to me."
What grace, what kindness, or what destiny
Will give me wings, as the fair-feather'd dove,
To raise me hence and seek my rest above?

—Kennet's Translation.

On the death of Cino da Pistoia:

Weep, beauteous damsels, and let Cupid weep,
Of every region weep, ye lover train;
He, who so skilfully attuned his strain
To your fond cause, is sunk in death's cold sleep!
Such limits let not my affliction keep,
As may the solace of soft tears restrain;
And, to relieve my bosom of its pain,
Be all my sighs tumultuous, utter'd deep!
Let song itself, and votaries of verse,
Breathe mournful accents o'er our Cino's bier,
Who late is gone to number with the blest!
Oh! weep, Pistoia, weep your sons perverse;
Its choicest habitant has fled our sphere,
And heaven may glory in its welcome guest!

—Nott's Translation.

Seventeen years have made no difference in his love:

The seventeenth summer now, alas! is gone,
And still with ardor unconsumed I glow;
Yet find, whene'er myself I seek to know,
Amidst the fire a frosty chill come on.
Truly 'tis said, "Ere Habit quits her throne,

PETRARCH AND LAURA

Years bleach the hair." The senses feel life's snow,
But not less hot the tides of passion flow:
Such is our earthly nature's malison!
Oh! come the happy day, when doom'd to smart
No more, from flames and lingering sorrows free,
Calm I may note how fast youth's minutes flew!
Ah! will it e'er be mine the hour to see,
When with delight, nor duty nor my heart
Can blame, these eyes once more that angel face may view?

—*Wrangham's Translation.*

The beauty and virtue of Laura:

Say from what part of heaven 'twas Nature drew,
From what idea, that so perfect mold
To form such features, bidding us behold,
In charms below, what she above could do?
What fountain-nymph, what dryad-maid e'er threw
Upon the wind such tresses of pure gold?
What heart such numerous virtues can unfold?
Although the chiefest all my fond hopes slew.
He for celestial charms may look in vain,
Who has not seen my fair one's radiant eyes,
And felt their glances pleasingly beguile.
How Love can heal his wounds, then wound again,
He only knows, who knows how sweet her sighs,
How sweet her converse, and how sweet her smile.

—*Nott's Translation.*

One of the most beautiful is the following sonnet, in which the poet compares Laura to the phoenix:

This wondrous phoenix with the golden plumes,
Forms without art so rare a ring to deck
That beautiful and soft and snowy neck,
That every heart it melts, and mine consumes:
Forms, too, a natural diadem which lights
The air around, whence Love with silent steel

Draws liquid subtle fire, which still I feel.
Fierce burning me though sharpest winter bites;
Border'd with azure, a rich purple vest,
Sprinkled with roses, veils her shoulders fair:
Rare garment hers, as grace unique, alone!
Fame, in the opulent and odorous breast
Of Arab mountains, buries her sole lair,
Who in our heaven so high a pitch has flown.

MacGregor's Translation.

Hope alone sustains him in his misery:

Hard heart and cold, a stern will past belief.
In angel form of gentle sweet allure;
If thus her practiced rigor long endure,
O'er me her triumph will be poor and brief.
For when or spring, or die, flower, herb, and leaf.
When day is brightest, night when most obscure,
Alway I weep. Great cause from Fortune sure,
From Love and Laura have I for my grief.
I live in hope alone, remembering still
How by long fall of small drops I have seen
Marble and solid stone that worn have been.
No heart there is so hard, so cold no will,
By true tears, fervent prayers, and faithful love
That will not deign at length to melt and move.

—*MacGregor's Translation.*

On leaving Avignon:

Backward at every weary step and slow
These limbs I turn which with great pain I bear;
Then take I comfort from the fragrant air
That breathes from thee, and sighing onward go.
But when I think how joy is turned to woe,
Remembering my short life and whence I fare,
I stay my feet for anguish and despair,
And cast my tearful eyes on earth below.
At times amid the storm of misery
This doubt assails me: how frail limbs and poor
Can severed from their spirit hope to live.

Then answers Love: Hast thou no memory
How I to lovers this great guerdon give,
Free from all human bondage to endure?
—*Symonds' Translation.*

OH, THAT I HAD WINGS LIKE A DOVE

I am so tired beneath the ancient load
Of my misdeeds and custom's tyranny,
That much I fear to fail upon the road
And yield my soul unto mine enemy.
'Tis true a friend from whom all splendor flowed,
To save me came with matchless courtesy:
Then flew far up from sight to heaven's abode,
So that I strive in vain his face to see.
Yet still his voice reverberates here below:
Oh ye who labor, lo! the path is here;
Come unto me if none your going stay!
What grace, what love, what fate surpassing fear
Shall give me wings like dove's wings soft as snow,
That I may rest and raise me from the clay?
—*Symonds' Translation.*

The foregoing sonnets have been taken from the first division, *To Laura in Life;* the remainder of those quoted were written after her death. The first, introductory in its nature, is particularly fine:

ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF LAURA'S DEATH

Woe for the 'witching look of that fair face!
The port where ease with dignity combined!
Woe for those accents, that each savage mind
To softness tuned, to noblest thoughts the base!
And the sweet smile, from whence the dart I trace,
Which now leaves death my only hope behind!
Exalted soul, most fit on thrones to 've shined,
But that too late she came this earth to grace!
For you I still must burn, and breathe in you;

For I was ever yours; of you bereft,
Full little now I reck all other care.
With hope and with desire you thrill'd me through,
When last my only joy on earth I left:—
But caught by winds each word was lost in air.

—*Anon.*

He prays that Laura may appear before him in a vision:

Dear precious pledge, by Nature snatch'd away,
But yet reserved for me in realms undying;
O thou on whom my life is aye relying,
Why tarry thus, when for thine aid I pray?
Time was, when sleep could to mine eyes convey
Sweet visions, worthy thee;—why is my sighing
Unheeded now?—who keeps thee from replying?
Surely contempt in heaven cannot stay:
Often on earth the gentlest heart is fain
To feed and banquet on another's woe
(Thus love is conquer'd in his own domain),
But thou, who seest through me, and dost know
All that I feel,—thou, who canst soothe my pain,
Oh! let thy blessed shade its peace bestow.

—*Wrottesley's Translation.*

His prayer is answered:

What angel of compassion, hovering near,
Heard, and to heaven my heart grief instant bore,
Whence now I feel descending as of yore
My lady, in that bearing chaste and dear,
My lone and melancholy heart to cheer,
So free from pride, of humbleness such store,
In fine, so perfect, though at death's own door,
I live, and life no more is dull and drear.
Blessed is she who so can others bless
With her fair sight, or with that tender speech
To whose full meaning love alone can reach.
"Dear friend," she says, "thy pangs my soul distress;

But for our good I did thy homage shun''—
In sweetest tones which might arrest the sun.
—*MacGregor's Translation.*

He seems to be with her in heaven:

So often on the wings of thought I fly
Up to heaven's blissful seats, that I appear
As one of those whose treasure is lodged there,
The rent veil of mortality thrown by.
A pleasing chillness thrills my heart, while I
Listen to her voice, who bids me paleness wear—
''Ah! now, my friend, I love thee, now revere,
For changed thy face, thy manners,'' doth she cry.
She leads me to her Lord: and then I bow,
Preferring humble prayer, He would allow
That I his glorious face, and hers might see.
Thus He replies: ''Thy destiny's secure;
To stay some twenty, or some ten years more,
Is but a little space, though long it seems to thee.''
—*Nott's Translation.*

When it is remembered that there are more than three hundred twenty sonnets, beside twenty-nine canzoni and a number of other lyrics in the *Rime,* it is evident that from such a wealth of material no two persons would make the same selections, and that it is impossible to give more than a glimpse into the number.

In the following sestina he prays God to guide his frail bark into a safe port:

Who is resolved to venture his vain life
On the deceitful wave and 'mid the rocks,
Alone, unfearing death, in little bark,
Can never be far distant from his end:
Therefore betimes he should return to port
While to the helm yet answers his true sail.

The gentle breezes to which helm and sail
I trusted, entering on this amorous life,
And hoping soon to make some better port,
Have led me since amid a thousand rocks,
And the sure causes of my mournful end
Are not alone without, but in my bark.

Long cabin'd and confined in this blind bark,
I wander'd, looking never at the sail,
Which, prematurely, bore me to my end;
Till He was pleased who brought me into life
So far to call me back from those sharp rocks,
That, distantly, at last was seen my port.

As lights at midnight seen in any port,
Sometimes from the main sea by passing bark,
Save when their ray is lost 'mid storms or rocks;
So I too from above the swollen sail
Saw the sure colors of that other life,
And could not help but sigh to reach my end.

Not that I yet am certain of that end,
For wishing with the dawn to be in port,
Is a long voyage for so short a life:
And then I fear to find me in frail bark,
Beyond my wishes full its every sail
With the strong wind which drove me on those rocks.

Escape I living from these doubtful rocks,
Or if my exile have but a fair end,
How happy shall I be to furl my sail,
And my last anchor cast in some sure port;
But, ah! I burn, and, as some blazing bark,
So hard to me to leave my wonted life.

Lord of my end and master of my life,
Before I lose my bark amid the rocks,
Direct to a good port its harass'd sail!

—*MacGregor's Translation.*

The following is Leigh Hunt's version of Petrarch's canzone to the fountain of Vaucluse—contemplations of death:

Clear, fresh, and dulcer streams,
Which the fair shape, who seems
To me sole woman, haunted at noon-tide;
Fair bough, so gently fit,
(I sigh to think of it,)
Which lent a pillar to her lovely side;
And turf, and flowers bright-eyed,
O'er which her folded gown
Flow'd like an angel's down;
And you, O holy air and hush'd,
Where first my heart at her sweet glances gush'd;
Give ear, give ear, with one consenting,
To my last words, my last and my lamenting.

If 'tis my fate below,
And Heaven will have it so,
That Love must close these dying eyes in tears,
May my poor dust be laid
In middle of your shade,
While my soul, naked, mounts to its own spheres.
The thought would calm my fears,
When taking, out of breath,
The doubtful step of death;
For never could my spirit find
A stiller port after the stormy wind;
Nor in more calm, abstracted bourne,
Slip from my travail'd flesh, and from my bones outworn.

Perhaps, some future hour,
To her accustom'd bower
Might come the untamed, and yet the gentle she;
And where she saw me first,
Might turn with eyes athirst
And kinder joy to look again for me;
Then, oh! the charity!

Seeing amidst the stones
The earth that held my bones,
A sigh for very love at last
Might ask of Heaven to pardon me the past:
And Heaven itself could not say nay,
As with her gentle veil she wiped the tears away.
How well I call to mind,
When from those boughs the wind
Shook down upon her bosom flower on flower;
And there she sat, meek-eyed,
In midst of all that pride,
Sprinkled and blushing through an amorous shower
Some to her hair paid dower,
And seem'd to dress the curls,
Queenlike, with gold and pearls;
Some, snowing, on her drapery stopp'd,
Some on the earth, some on the water dropp'd;
While others, fluttering from above,
Seem'd wheeling round in pomp, and saying, "Here reigns Love."
How often then I said,
Inward, and fill'd with dread,
"Doubtless this creature came from Paradise!"
For at her look the while,
Her voice, and her sweet smile,
And heavenly air, truth parted from mine eyes;
So that, with long-drawn sighs,
I said, as far from men,
"How came I here, and when?"
I had forgotten; and alas!
Fancied myself in heaven, not where I was;
And from that time till this, I bear
Such love for the green bower, I cannot rest elsewhere.

The following, in which Petrarch prays that Love will take vengeance on the scornful pride of Laura, is a good example of the madrigals:

Now, Love, at length behold a youthful fair,
Who spurns thy rule, and, mocking all my care,

'Mid two such foes, is safe and fancy free.
Thou art well arm'd, 'mid flowers and verdure she,
In simplest robe and natural tresses found,
Against thee haughty still and harsh to me;
I am thy thrall: but, if thy bow be sound,
If yet one shaft be thine, in pity, take
Vengeance upon her for our common sake.

—*MacGregor's Translation.*

The following, and last, selection is an extract from *The Triumph of Eternity,* and gives the concluding verses:

And Time's revolving wheels shall lose at last
The speed that spins the future and the past;
And, sovereign of an undisputed throne,
Awful eternity shall reign alone.
Then every darksome veil shall fleet away
That hides the prospects of eternal day:
Those cloud-born objects of our hopes and fears,
Whose air-drawn forms deluded memory bears
As of substantial things, away so fast
Shall fleet, that mortals, at their speed aghast,
Watching the change of all beneath the moon,
Shall ask, what once they were, and will be soon?
The time will come when every change shall cease,
This quick revolving wheel shall rest in peace:
No summer then shall glow, nor winter freeze;
Nothing shall be to come, and nothing past,
But an eternal now shall ever last.
Though time shall be no more, yet space shall give
A nobler theater to love and live.
The winged courier then no more shall claim
The power to sink or raise the notes of Fame,
Or give its glories to the noontide ray:
True merit then, in everlasting day,
Shall shine for ever, as at first it shone
At once to God and man and angels known.
Happy are they who in this changing sphere

Already have begun the bright career
That reaches to the goal which, all in vain,
The Muse would blazon in her feeble strain:
But blest above all other blest is he
Who from the trammels of mortality,
Ere half the vital thread ran out, was free,
Mature for Heaven; where now the matchless fair
Preserves those features, that seraphic air,
And all those mental charms that raised my mind,
To judge of heaven while yet on earth confined.
That soft attractive glance that won my heart
When first my bosom felt unusual smart,
Now beams, now glories, in the realms above,
Fed by the eternal source of light and love.
Then shall I see her as I first beheld,
But lovelier far, and by herself excell'd;
And I distinguish'd in the bands above
Shall hear this plaudit in the choirs of love:—
"Lo! this is he who sung in mournful strains
For many years a lover's doubts and pains;
Yet in this soul-expanding, sweet employ,
A sacred transport felt above all vulgar joy."
She too shall wonder at herself to hear
Her praises ring around the radiant sphere:
But of that hour it is not mine to know;
To her, perhaps, the period of my woe
Is manifest; for she my fate may find
In the pure mirror of the eternal mind.
To me it seems at hand a sure presage,
Denotes my rise from this terrestrial stage;
Then what I gain'd and lost below shall lie
Suspended in the balance of the sky,
And all our anxious sublunary cares
Shall seem one tissue of Arachne's snares;
And all the lying vanities of life,
The sordid source of envy, hate, and strife,
Ignoble as they are, shall then appear
Before the searching beam of truth severe;
Then souls, from sense refined, shall see the fraud

That led them from the living way of God.
From the dark dungeon of the human breast
All direful secrets then shall rise confess'd,
In honor multiplied—a dreadful show
To hierarchies above, and saints below.
Eternal reason then shall give her doom;
And, sever'd wide, the tenants of the tomb
Shall seek their portions with instinctive haste,
Quick as the savage speeds along the waste.
Then shall the golden hoard its trust betray,
And they, that, mindless of that dreadful day,
Boasted their wealth, its vanity shall know
In the dread avenue of endless woe:
While they whom moderation's wholesome rule
Kept still unstain'd in Virtue's heavenly school,
Who the calm sunshine of the soul beneath
Enjoy'd, will share the triumph of the Faith.

These pageants five the world and I beheld
The sixth and last, I hope, in heaven reveal'd
(If Heaven so will), when Time with speedy hand
The scene despoils, and Death's funereal wand
The triumph leads. But soon they both shall fall
Under that mighty hand that governs all,
While they who toil for true renown below,
Whom envious Time and Death, a mightier foe,
Relentless plunged in dark oblivion's womb,
When virtue seem'd to seek the silent tomb,
Spoil'd of her heavenly charms once more shall rise,
Regain their beauty, and assert the skies;
Leaving the dark sojourn of time beneath,
And the wide desolated realms of Death.
But she will early seek these glorious bounds,
Whose long-lamented fall the world resounds
In unison with me. And heaven will view
That awful day her heavenly charms renew,
When soul with body joins. Gebenna's strand
Saw me enroll'd in Love's devoted band,
And mark'd my toils through many hard campaigns

And wounds, whose scars my memory yet retains.
Blest is the pile that marks the hallow'd dust!—
There, at the resurrection of the just,
When the last trumpet with earth-shaking sound
Shall wake her sleepers from their couch profound;
Then, when that spotless and immortal mind
In a material mold once more enshrined,
With wonted charms shall wake seraphic love,
How will the beatific sight improve
Her heavenly beauties in the climes above!

—*Boyd's Translation.*

THE LEANING TOWER OF BOLOGNA

CHAPTER X

THE FIRST PERIOD (CONCLUDED) 1100–1475

BOCCACCIO AND THE FIRST DECLINE

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. Giovanni Boccaccio, who usually styled himself *Of Certaldo* and who was sometimes called *The Certaldese,* was born in Paris in 1313, an illegitimate child. His father, Boccaccio di Chellino, a Florentine merchant of so prudent and thrifty a type that his son called him stingy, had the boy taught grammar and arithmetic, sent him into the counting-house at thirteen, and at

seventeen placed him with a mercantile firm in Naples. After two years in this employment, Boccaccio's distaste for trade proved so strong that the father gave up in despair and sent the youth to study law at the Neapolitan university; but we have no evidence that the lively young fellow found the canonical textbooks any more to his taste than the counters of a mercantile establishment.

From boyhood Boccaccio had shown a strong inclination toward poetry and a keen taste for the classics, so that soon after coming to his majority he seems to have conquered his father's objections, or at any rate to have ignored them, and given his time to literature. He was particularly devoted to the works of Dante, and studied his writings with extreme care.

In 1350 he formed an intimate friendship with Petrarch and, following the latter's example, studied the classic manuscripts with care, collected many of them and copied those which he was too poor to purchase. He claims to have been the first Tuscan to bring from Greece a copy of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. His studies of Greek and Latin made him an authority in the subject, and his *Genealogy of the Gods,* in fifteen books, was the most comprehensive work on that subject in Europe. Influenced by such master minds as those of Dante and Petrarch, Boccaccio became the third of the great trio who promoted and fostered the first renaissance and gave Italy a

BOCCACCIO
1313–1375

fine native literature long in advance of any other European nation.

About 1331, in Naples, he fell violently in love with Maria d' Aquino, the Fiammetta of his works, a married woman generally supposed to have been an illegitimate daughter of King Robert of Naples. It was to gratify this mistress that Boccaccio composed his first novels. This union was not, however, a happy one, and after many bitter disappointments Boccaccio, in 1340, left Naples. In 1346 we find him at Ravenna; in 1348, at Forli. Meanwhile, his literary work had acquired him a considerable eminence; for, from 1349 he seems to have had a permanent residence in Florence, where he was already in the high esteem of his fellow-citizens. In 1350 he entertained Petrarch on the latter's visit to Florence, and in 1351 he went to Padua to offer his friend, in behalf of the Republic, a professorship in the Florentine university. From this time down to 1367 he received many diplomatic missions from his city.

In 1362 a great change came over Boccaccio. His patrimony by this time was exhausted, and he was not successful in finding any stable means of livelihood. He was in such straits that in 1363 Petrarch was moved to offer him his own home as a shelter—an act of kindness which Boccaccio declined. Meanwhile, Boccaccio had been turning more and more to religious mediation, deeply repenting the frivolous life of his youth which had inspired so much

of his literary work. In 1373 he was commissioned to lecture on Dante in Florence. He fell ill after the sixtieth lecture and returned to Certaldo, where he still had a small property. There he died, December 21, 1375.

II. The Works of Boccaccio. Boccaccio was a genius of the highest class, and his influence upon the literature of the world it is not easy to overestimate. Whatever he undertook he did well, and his originality was such that he opened paths in every direction which succeeding artists have been compelled to follow. He wrote in Latin; he composed epic poems and exquisite sonnets; he originated poetic forms; he wrote the first Italian novels worthy of the name, and he finished and fixed the forms of Italian prose. Only the *Decameron* will require much time from us; a few of his sonnets are worth preservation; the *Filocopo, Ameto, Fiammetta,* and others are the novels which paved the way for his greatest work. The *Filocopo,* the first and longest of his novels, would be considered intolerably tedious now, but it is noteworthy as being the first pure prose novel, a literary type which was to succeed the metrical romance. In its own time the *Filocopo* was an extraordinary work, as it established the form of the romance which was to continue until our modern novel of life and manners took its place. The *Ameto* is another landmark in the history of literature, for it was the first characteristic pastoral romance.

In saying that Boccaccio was one of the most original geniuses of all time we do not assert that his stories, in plot at least, were original, for we are able to trace the sources of many of them. There had been a prose fiction prior to the time of Boccaccio, and many tales had been collected into the *Gesta Romanorum* and the *Cento Novelle Antiche,* the latter a collection of a hundred stories, concerning which there has been much argument and which were undoubtedly composed prior to the *Decameron.* These latter stories are perhaps not in themselves particularly interesting, but they laid the foundation for a great many plays and romances at subsequent times, and it is not surprising at all that Boccaccio took many of his subjects from them. Besides, he undoubtedly collected the materials for the *Decameron* wherever he could find them, either among the Italians or surrounding nations. One thing he did, however, and that was so far to surpass his sources in style that they are forgotten, while his versions remain.

It is quite possible that the sources from which they originated had much to do with the immoralities of the tales, but we are still surprised at the licentiousness prevalent in Florence at this time. It is a curious fact that after great disasters such as wars, plagues, earthquakes, etc., in which family ties have been broken, the men lost and the whole of society disorganized, has followed an overwhelming wave of immorality. It seems that

vice grows rampant in these periods of confusion. From what we know of Boccaccio, we cannot conceive him a man sufficiently strong to stem the tide.

III. Boccaccio's Sonnets. Boccaccio's enthusiasm for the *Commedia* and the reverence with which he looked upon the name of Dante claim our regard; two of his sonnets, which have been translated by Rossetti, are fine examples of his best style and warmest feeling. The first, which is an inscription for a portrait, shows that his political and poetical greatness were both appreciated by the greatest minds of the generation in which he lived:

Dante Alighieri, a dark oracle
Of wisdom and of art, I am; whose mind
Has to my country such great gifts assign'd
That men account my powers a miracle.
My lofty fancy pass'd as low as Hell,
As high as Heaven, secure and unconfined;
And in my noble book doth every kind
Of earthly lore and heavenly doctrine dwell.
Renowned Florence was my mother,—nay,
Stepmother unto me her piteous son,
Through sin of cursed slander's tongue and tooth.
Ravenna sheltered me so cast away;
My body is with her,—my soul with One
For whom no envy can make dim the truth.

The personal love and confidence with which Boccaccio could address the spirit of his mighty master is shown in the second sonnet, addressed *To Dante in Paradise, after Fiammetta's Death:*

Dante, if thou within the sphere of Love,
As I believe, remain'st contemplating
Beautiful Beatrice, whom thou didst sing
Erewhile, and so wast drawn to her above;—
Unless from false life true life thee remove
So far that Love's forgotten, let me bring
One prayer before thee: for an easy thing
This were, to thee whom I do ask it of.
I know that where all joy doth most abound
In the third Heaven, my own Fiammetta sees
The grief which I have borne since she is dead.
O pray her (if mine image be not drown'd
In Lethe) that her prayers may never cease
Until I reach her and am comforted.

The three sonnets now to be presented are beautiful in themselves and are worthy of universal recognition, but here again competent critics tell us that the translations by Rossetti are even more beautiful than in the original language. The title of the first is *Of Fiammetta Singing:*

Love steer'd my course, while yet the sun rode high,
On Scylla's waters to a myrtle-grove:
The heaven was still and the sea did not move;
Yet now and then a little breeze went by
Stirring the tops of trees against the sky:
And then I heard a song as glad as love,
So sweet that never yet the like thereof
Was heard in any mortal company.
"A nymph, a goddess, or an angel sings
Unto herself, within this chosen place,
Of ancient loves;" so said I at that sound.
And there my lady, 'mid the shadowings
Of myrtle-trees, 'mid flowers and grassy space,
Singing I saw, with others who sat round.

Of His Last Sight of Fiammetta:

Round her red garland and her golden hair
I saw a fire about Fiammetta's head;
Thence to a little cloud I watch'd it fade,
Than silver or than gold more brightly fair;
And like a pearl that a gold ring doth bear,
Even so an angel sat therein, who sped
Alone and glorious throughout heaven, array'd
In sapphires and in gold that lit the air.
Then I rejoiced as hoping happy things,
Who rather should have then discern'd how God
Had haste to make my lady all his own,
Even as it came to pass. And with these stings
Of sorrow, and with life's most weary load
I dwell, who fain would be where she is gone.

Of Three Girls and Their Talk:

By a clear well, within a little field
Full of green grass and flowers of every hue,
Sat three young girls, relating (as I knew)
Their loves. And each had twined a bough to shield
Her lovely face; and the green leaves did yield
The golden hair their shadow; while the two
Sweet colors mingled, both blown lightly through
With a soft wind for ever stirr'd and still'd.
After a little while one of them said
(I heard her), "Think! If, ere the next hour struck,
Each of our lovers should come here to-day,
Think you that we should fly or feel afraid?"
To whom the others answer'd, "From such luck
A girl would be a fool to run away."

IV. The "Decameron." The *Decameron* consists of a hundred tales set in a frame somewhat after the manner of the *Arabian Nights*, an arrangement which Boccaccio could have found in the early version of the "Libro de

Setti Savi." The scene of the frame is laid in Florence in the year 1348, while the great plague was devastating the city. During the continuance of the Black Death, seven young ladies met accidentally in the church of St. Mary. At the suggestion of Pampinea, the eldest of their number, they resolved upon leaving the city in its terrible affliction, and having joined to their company three young men who were their admirers, they hastened to a villa two miles distant from Florence. Here for ten successive days they whiled away their time. Their manner of life was to rise before the sun was high, eat a slight repast composed principally of confections and wine, amuse themselves in various pastimes and about noon assemble around a beautiful fountain, where, a sovereign having been elected, each related a tale. After the stories of the day were told, the company partook of a late dinner and then concluded the evening with songs and music. As it was a party of ten and each day each told a story, the number of tales amounts to a hundred, and the outing terminates not from any cause apparently except that the supply of tales had been exhausted.

One naturally associates this frame with that which Chaucer used in his *Canterbury Tales,* but the English poet excels in introducing a wider range of characters, which he develops skillfully, and in associating the tales with the character of the teller. It is in this respect that Boccaccio's production is weak, for of the

ten who engage in the story-telling contest, only two appear to have any individuality. Dioneo is of a comical turn of mind, while Philostrato is melancholy. Nevertheless, some of the most humorous stories, or at least the most ridiculous ones, are told by Philostrato, while the tale of *Griselda,* perhaps the most pathetic in the collection, is told by Dioneo. On the other hand, Boccaccio excels in the naturalness and harmony of the setting of the tales. The idea of Chaucer was that each of his miscellaneous group of pilgrims, twenty-nine in number, should tell a tale, some while they are on the journey and others after they reach a roadside tavern, while Boccaccio's tales are told by a limited number of people seeking entertainment in the luxury and retirement of a beautiful Italian villa.

That under the terrifying conditions of the great plague a group of people should retire and devote themselves for ten days to the telling of tales, principally amusing and licentious, seems at first unnatural and improbable, but upon consideration it may be that at such a moment, when all seems lost and destruction at hand, amusement is the one thing which would be sought by light and irresponsible characters. A passage from Thucydides, quoted by Dunlop, is interesting in this connection:

> The Athenians, seeing the strange mutability of outward condition; the rich untimely cut off, and their wealth pouring suddenly on the indigent, thought it

prudent to catch hold of speedy enjoyments and quick gusts of pleasure, persuaded that their bodies and their wealth might be their own merely for the day. No one continued resolute enough to form any honest or generous design, when so uncertain whether he should live to effect it. Whatever he knew could improve the pleasure or satisfaction of the present moment, *that* he determined to be honor and interest. Reverence of the gods, or laws of society, laid no restraint upon them; and as the heaviest of judgments to which man could be doomed, was already hanging over their heads, they snatched the interval of life for pleasure before it fell.

In handling the situation, Boccaccio gives us some most brilliant descriptions of the terrors of the plague and, in contrast, some of gay fields, clear fountains, wooded hills and magnificent castles which still have a local tone that we can scarcely appreciate. Italians recognize the palace to which the Florentines first retired as the Poggio Gherardi; the one described in the prologue of the third day, as the Villa Palmieri; and the vale so charmingly painted near the conclusion of the sixth day, as that upon which the delighted traveler may still gaze from the summit of Fiesole.

V. Descriptive Passages. A scene of death and desolation in somber and terrific colors is that of the great plague in the *Introduction:*

Indeed, leaving be that townsman avoided townsman and that well nigh no neighbor took thought unto other and that kinsfolk seldom or never visited one another and held no converse together save from afar, this tribulation had stricken such terror to the hearts of all, men and women alike, that brother forsook brother, uncle nephew and sister brother and oftentimes wife husband;

nay (what is yet more extraordinary and well nigh incredible) fathers and mothers refused to visit or tend their very children, as they had not been theirs. By reason whereof there remained unto those (and the number of them, both males and females, was incalculable) who fell sick, none other succor than that which they owed either to the charity of friends (and of these there were few) or the greed of servants, who tended them, allured by high and extravagant wage; albeit, for all this, these latter were not grown many, and those men and women of mean understanding and for the most part unused to such offices, who served for well nigh nought but to reach things called for by the sick or to note when they died; and in the doing of these services many of them perished with their gain.

Of this abandonment of the sick by neighbors, kinsfolk and friends and of the scarcity of servants arose an usage before well nigh unheard of, to wit, that no woman, how fair or lovesome or well-born soever she might be, once fallen sick, recked aught of having a man to tend her, whatever he might be, or young or old; the which belike, in those who recovered, was the occasion of lesser modesty in time to come. Moreover, there ensued of this abandonment the death of many who peradventure, had they been succored, would have escaped alive; wherefore, as well for the lack of the opportune services which the sick availed not to have as for the virulence of the plague, such was the multitude of those who died in the city by day and by night that it was an astonishment to hear tell thereof, much more to see it; and thence, as it were of necessity, there sprang up among those who abode alive things contrary to the pristine manners of the townsfolk.

It was then (even as we yet see it used) a custom that the kinswomen and she-neighbors of the dead should assemble in his house and there condole with those who more nearly pertained unto him, whilst his neighbors and many other citizens foregathered with his next of kin before his house, whither, according to the dead man's quality, came the clergy, and he with funeral

pomp of chants and candles was borne on the shoulders of his peers to the church chosen by himself before his death; which usages, after the virulence of the plague began to increase, were either altogether or for the most part laid aside, and other and strange customs sprang up in their stead. For that, not only did folk die without having a multitude of women about them, but many there were who departed this life without witness and few indeed were they to whom the pious plaints and bitter tears of their kinsfolk were vouchsafed; nay, in lieu of these things there obtained, for the most part, laughter and jests and gibes and feasting and merrymaking in company; which usance women, laying aside womanly pitifulness, had right well learned for their own safety.

Few, again, were they whose bodies were accompanied to the church by more than half a score or a dozen of their neighbors, and of these no worshipful and illustrious citizens, but a sort of blood-suckers, sprung from the dregs of the people, who styled themselves *pickmen* and did such offices for hire, shouldered the bier and bore it with hurried steps, not to that church which the dead man had chosen before his death, but most times to the nearest, behind five or six priests, with little light and whiles none at all, which latter, with the aid of the said pickmen, thrust him into what grave soever they first found unoccupied, without troubling themselves with too long or too formal a service.

The condition of the common people (and belike, in great part, of the middle class also) was yet more pitiable to behold, for that these, for the most part retained by hope or poverty in their houses and abiding in their own quarters, sickened by the thousand daily and being untended and unsuccored died well nigh all without recourse. Many breathed their last in the open street, whilst other many, for all they died in their houses, made it known to the neighbors that they were dead rather by the stench of their rotting bodies than otherwise; and of these and others who died all about the whole city was full. For the most part one same usance was observed

by the neighbors, moved more by fear lest the corruption of the dead bodies should imperil themselves than by any charity they had for the departed; to wit, that either with their own hands or with the aid of certain bearers, whenas they might have any, they brought the bodies of those who had died forth of their houses and laid them before their doors, were especially in the morning, those who went about might see corpses without number; then they fetched biers and some, in default thereof, they laid upon some board or other. Nor was it only one bier that carried two or three corpses, nor did this happen but once; nay, many might have been counted which contained husband and wife, two or three brothers, father and son or the like. And an infinite number of times it befell that, two priests going with one cross for some one, three or four biers, borne by bearers, ranged themselves behind the latter, and whereas the priests thought to have but one dead man to bury, they had six or eight, and whiles more. Nor therefore were the dead honored with aught of tears or candles or funeral train; nay, the thing was come to such a pass that folk recked no more of men that died than nowadays they would of goats; whereby it very manifestly appeared that that which the natural course of things had not availed, by dint of small and infrequent harms, to teach the wise to endure with patience, the very greatness of their ills had brought even the simple to expect and make no account of. The consecrated ground sufficing not to the burial of the vast multitude of corpses aforesaid, which daily and well nigh hourly came carried in crowds to every church—especially if it were sought to give each his own place, according to ancient usance,—there were made throughout the churchyards, after every other part was full, vast trenches, wherein those who came after were laid by the hundred and being heaped up therein by layers, as goods are stored aboard ship, were covered with a little earth, till such time as they reached the top of the trench.

Moreover—not to go longer searching out and recalling every particular of our past miseries, as they befell

throughout the city—I say that, whilst so sinister a time prevailed in the latter, on no wise therefor was the surrounding country spared, wherein (letting be the castles, which in their littleness were like unto the city), throughout the scattered villages and in the fields, the poor and miserable husbandmen and their families, without succor or physician or aid of servitor, died, not like men, but well nigh like beasts, by the ways or in their tillages or about the houses, indifferently by day and night. By reason whereof, growing lax like the townsfolk in their manners and customs, they recked not of any thing or business of theirs; nay, all, as if they looked for death that very day, studied with all their wit, not to help to maturity the future produce of their cattle and their fields and the fruits of their own past toils, but to consume those which were ready to hand. Thus it came to pass that the oxen, the asses, the sheep, the goats, the swine, the fowls, nay, the very dogs, so faithful to mankind, being driven forth of their own houses, went straying at their pleasure about the fields, where the very corn was abandoned, without being cut, much less gathered in; and many, well nigh like reasonable creatures, after grazing all day, returned at night, glutted, to their houses, without the constraint of any herdsman.

To leave the country and return to the city, what more can be said save that such and so great was the cruelty of heaven (and in part, peradventure, that of men) that, between March and the following July, what with the virulence of that pestiferous sickness and the number of sick folk ill tended or forsaken in their need, through the fearfulness of those who were whole, it is believed for certain that upward of an hundred thousand human beings perished within the walls of the city of Florence, which, peradventure, before the advent of that death-dealing calamity, had not been accounted to hold so many? Alas, how many great palaces, how many goodly houses, how many noble mansions once full of families, of lords and of ladies, abode empty even to the meanest servant! How many memorable families, how many

ample heritages, how many famous fortunes were seen to remain without lawful heir! How many valiant men, how many fair ladies, how many sprightly youths, whom, not others only, but Galen, Hippocrates or Aesculapius themselves, would have judged most hale, breakfasted in the morning with their kinsfolk, comrades and friends and that same night supped with their ancestors in the other world!

The description of the Villa Palmieri is as follows:

Here they entered and having gone all about and viewed the great saloons and the quaint and elegant chambers all thoroughly furnished with that which pertaineth thereunto, they mightily commended the place and accounted its lord magnificent. Then, going below and seeing the very spacious and cheerful court thereof, the cellars full of choicest wines and the very cool water that welled there in great abundance, they praised it yet more. Thence, as if desirous of repose, they betook themselves to sit in a gallery which commanded all the courtyard and was all full of flowers, such as the season afforded, and leafage, whereupon there came the careful seneschal and entertained and refreshed them with costliest confections and wines of choice. Thereafter, letting open to them a garden, all walled about, which coasted the palace, they entered therein and it seeming to them, at their entering, altogether wonder-goodly, they addressed themselves more intently to view the particulars thereof. It had about it and athwart the middle very spacious alleys, all straight as arrows and enbowered with trellises of vines, which made great show of bearing abundance of grapes that year and being then all in blossom, yielded so rare a savor about the garden, that, as it blent with the fragrance of many another sweet-smelling plant that there gave scent, they seemed they were among all the spiceries that ever grew in the Orient. The sides of these alleys were all in a manner walled

about with roses, red and white, and jessamine, wherefore not only of a morning, but what while the sun was highest, one might go all about, untouched thereby, neath odoriferous and delightsome shade. What and how many and how orderly disposed were the plants that grew in that place, it were tedious to recount; suffice it that there is none goodly of those which may brook our air but was there in abundance. Amiddleward the garden (what was not less, but yet more commendable than aught else there) was a plat of very fine grass, so green that it seemed well nigh black, enameled all with belike a thousand kinds of flowers and closed about with the greenest and lustiest of orange and citron trees, the which, bearing at once old fruits and new and flowers, not only afforded the eyes a pleasant shade, but were no less grateful to the smell. Midmost the grassplat was a fountain of the whitest marble, enchased with wonder-goodly sculptures, and thence,—whether I know not from a natural or an artificial source,—there sprang, by a figure that stood on a column in its midst, so great a jet of water and so high towards the sky, whence not without a delectable sound it fell back into the wonder-limpid fount, that a mill might have wrought with less; the which after (I mean the water which overflowed the full basin) issued forth of the lawn by a hidden way, and coming to light therewithout, encompassed it all about by very goodly and curiously wroughten channels. Thence by like channels it ran through well nigh every part of the pleasance and was gathered again at the last in a place whereby it had issue from the fair garden and whence it descended, in the clearest of streams, toward the plain; but, ere it won thither, turned two mills with exceeding power and to the no small vantage of the Lord.

The beautiful valley visible from Fiesole, and called Ladies' Valley by Boccaccio, is described by him at the beginning of the sixth day:

They entered therein by a very straight way, on one side whereof ran a very clear streamlet, and saw it as fair and as delectable, especially at that season whenas the heat was great, as most might be conceived. According to that which one of them after told me, the plain that was in the valley was as round as if it had been traced with the compass, albeit it seemed the work of nature and not of art, and was in circuit a little more than half a mile, encompassed about with six little hills not overhigh, on the summit of each of which stood a palace builded in guise of a goodly castle. The sides of these hills went sloping gradually downward to the plain on such wise as we see in amphitheaters the degrees descend in ordered succession from the highest to the lowest, still contracting their circuit; and of these slopes those which looked towards the south were all full of vines and olives and almonds and cherries and figs and many another kind of fruit-bearing trees, without a span thereof being wasted; whilst those which faced the North Star were all covered with thickets of dwarf oaks and ashes and other trees as green and straight as might be. The middle plain, which had no other inlet than that whereby the ladies were come thither, was full of firs and cypresses and laurels and various sorts of pines, as well arrayed and ordered as if the best artist in that kind had planted them; and between these little or no sun, even at its highest, made its way to the ground, which was all one meadow of very fine grass, thick-sown with flowers purpurine and others. Moreover, that which afforded no less delight than otherwhat was a little stream, which ran down from a valley that divided two of the hills aforesaid and falling over cliffs of live rock, made a murmur very delectable to hear, what while it showed from afar, as it broke over the stones, like so much quicksilver jetting out, under pressure of somewhat, into fine spray. As it came down into the little plain, it was there received into a fair channel and ran very swiftly into the midst thereof, where it formed a lakelet, such as the townsfolk make whiles, by way of fishpond, in their

gardens, whenas they have a commodity thereof. This lakelet was no deeper than a man's stature, breast high, and its waters being exceeding clear and altogether untroubled with any admixture, it showed its bottom to be of a very fine gravel, the grains whereof whoso had nought else to do might, an he would, have availed to number; nor, looking into the water, was the bottom alone to be seen, nay, but so many fish fleeting hither and thither that, over and above the pleasance thereof, it was a marvel to behold; nor was it enclosed with other banks than the very soil of the meadow, which was the goodlier thereabout in so much as it received the more of its moisture. The water that abounded over and above the capacity of the lake was received into another channel, whereby, issuing forth of the little valley, it ran off into the lower parts.

VI. The Tales of the "Decameron." Because of its structure on the plan of ten, Boccaccio named his book the "ten days." Although the tales are grouped in tens and most of them are told in pursuance of directions given by the leader for the day, there is no real classification such as a student might wish to see. On the first day each member of the little party tells his story upon any subject he chooses; on the second day the subject suggested by the queen is "of those who, after being baffled by diverse chances, have won at last to a joyous issue beyond their hope;" the third day, "of such as have by dint of diligence acquired some much desired thing or recovered some lost good;" the fourth, "of those whose loves have had unhappy endings;" the fifth, "of that which hath happily betided lovers after sundry cruel and unfortunate adven-

tures;" the sixth, "of those who, being assailed with some jibing speech, have by some ready reply escaped loss, peril or shame;" the seventh, "of the tricks which women have played their husbands;" the eighth, "of the tricks that are played by men and women upon each other;" on the ninth day, the queen decided that each should be allowed to tell what story he wished; but on the tenth they returned again to their plan and related the tales "of those who have acted generously and magnificently."

It is unfortunate that a book which has been the source of so many novels, poems and dramas and which has in various ways, as we have indicated, influenced the course of world literature, should be so full of indecencies that it is unreadable at the present time. Though there are pure tales in the book, but few of them are among the best, and the wit, humor, dramatic power and fascinating plots are closed to us except as we obtain them, refined by the mind of some of our later writers. We can, however, give an epitome of some of the more important stories, and print one or two from the translation of Leopold Flameng.

1. First Day. *Third Story.* The following version is from the translation mentioned above:

Saladin—whose valor was such that not only from a man of little account it made him Soldan of Babylon, but gained him many victories over kings Saracen and Christian—having in divers wars and in the exercise of

his extraordinary munificences expended his whole treasure and having an urgent occasion for a good sum of money nor seeing whence he might avail to have it as promptly as it behoved him, called to mind a rich Jew, by name Melchizedek, who lent at usance in Alexandria, and bethought himself that this latter had the wherewithal to oblige him, and he would; but he was so miserly that he would never have done it of his free-will and Saladin was loath to use force with him; wherefore, need constraining him, he set his every wit awork to find a means how the Jew might be brought to serve him in this and presently concluded to do him a violence colored by some show of reason.

Accordingly he sent for Melchizedek and receiving him familiarly, seated him by himself, then said to him: "Honest man, I have understood from divers persons that thou art a very learned man and deeply versed in matters of divinity; wherefore I would fain know of thee whether of the three Laws thou reputest the true, the Jewish, the Saracen or the Christian." The Jew, who was in truth a man of learning and understanding, perceived but too well that Saladin looked to entrap him in words, so he might fasten a quarrel on him, and bethought himself that he could not praise any of the three more than the others without giving him the occasion he sought. Accordingly, sharpening his wits, as became one who felt himself in need of an answer by which he might not be taken at a vantage, there speedily occurred to him that which it behoved him to reply and he said, "My lord, the question that you propound to me is a nice one and to acquaint you with that which I think of the matter, it behoveth me to tell you a little story, which you shall hear.

"An I mistake not, I mind me to have many a time heard tell that there was once a great man and a rich, who among other very precious jewels in his treasury, had a very goodly and costly ring, whereunto being minded, for its worth and beauty, to do honor and wishing to leave it in perpetuity to his descendants, he de-

clared that whichsoever of his sons should, at his death, be found in possession thereof, by his bequest unto him, should be recognized as his heir and be held of all the others in honor and reverence as chief and head. He to whom the ring was left by him held a like course with his own descendants and did even as his father had done. In brief, the ring passed from hand to hand, through many generations, and came at last into the possession of a man who had three goodly and virtuous sons all very obedient to their father, wherefore he loved them all three alike. The young men, knowing the usance of the ring, each for himself desiring to be the most honored among his folk, as best he might, besought his father, who was now an old man, to leave him the ring, whenas he came to die. The worthy man, who loved them all alike and knew not himself how to choose to which he had liefer leave the ring, besought himself, having promised it to each, to seek to satisfy all three and privily let make by a good craftsman other two rings, which were so like unto the first that he himself scarce knew which was the true. When he came to die, he secretly gave each one of his sons his ring, wherefore each of them, seeking, after their father's death, to occupy the inheritance and the honor and denying it to the others, produced his ring, in witness of his right, and the three rings being found so like unto one another that the true might not be known, the question which was the father's very heir abode pending and yet pendeth. And so say I to you, my lord, of the three Laws to the three peoples given of God the Father, whereof you question me; each people deemeth itself to have His inheritance, His true Law and His commandments; but of which in very deed hath them, even as of the rings, the question yet pendeth."

Saladin perceived that the Jew had excellently well contrived to escape the snare which he had spread before his feet; wherefore he concluded to discover to him his need and see if he were willing to serve him; and so accordingly he did, confessing to him that which he had

it in mind to do, had he not answered him on such discreet wise. The Jew freely furnished him with all that he required, and the Soldan after satisfied him in full; moreover, he gave him very great gifts and still had him to friend and maintained him about his own person in high and honorable estate.

2. SECOND DAY. *Ninth Story.* This story, which is sometimes regarded as one of the best in Boccaccio, has been considered the source from which Shakespeare drew the plot of *Cymbeline,* but the statement has been denied, though there is evidently much similarity. In substance it is as follows:

In a company of Italian merchants who happened to meet at Paris, Bernabo of Genoa boasts of the virtue of his wife Ginevra. Ambrogivolo, one of his companions, a man who has little faith in woman's chastity, is so incredulous that he exasperates Bernabo into betting five thousand florins against a thousand that in three months' time he cannot seduce the affections of Ginevra. Having arrived in Genoa, he learns so much of Ginevra's purity that he gives up the idea of gaining her affection and determines to win his bet by stratagem.

Forming an acquaintance with a poor woman who is about the house, he bribes her to introduce a chest in which he is enclosed into the bedchamber of Ginevra, and when night comes he opens the chest, discovers the wife asleep with a little child, is so affected by the purity of the vision that he contents himself

with taking a few trinkets from her room. Having escaped without detection, he returns to Paris and meets the husband on the day appointed. Bernabo, hearing the description of his wife's bedchamber and seeing the trinkets which Ambrogivolo has brought, is persuaded of his wife's infidelity, pays the debt and sends a servant to Genoa, avowedly to bring his wife to him but with private instructions to murder her on the way. The servant loses his nerve, and instead of murdering Ginevra, warns her and allows her to escape with the understanding that she shall leave the country, while he reports her death to his master.

Ginevra, disguised as a sailor, then takes passage on a merchant ship for Alexandria, where after some time she enters the service of the Soldan, whose confidence she gains to a remarkable degree and from whom she secures appointment as captain of the guards of the merchants at the fair of Acre. At the fair she sees in the possession of Ambrogivolo the trinkets and valuables which he had taken from her chamber, and upon inquiry is told by him in confidence just how they were obtained. Not suspecting the sex of his companion, Ambrogivolo is persuaded to go to Alexandria, and Ginevra managed to induce her husband to come to settle in the same place. When all have arrived, she discloses the infamy of Ambrogivolo and reveals herself to the astonished and delighted Bernabo. The traitor is ordered

to be fastened to a stake, and having been smeared with honey, is exposed naked to be devoured by the flies, wasps and gad-flies.

3. Fourth Day. *First Story.* From the introduction to the fourth day it would seem that Boccaccio had made public the *Decameron* as far as that point and that it must have been criticized, for he defends it at some length. In his vindication he tells a story to show that admiration of female beauty is born in a man and cannot be eradicated by education. A Florentine, having lost his wife, retires with his two-year-old boy to the mountains, where the child is brought up in fasting and prayer, and sees no human being but his father and hears of no secular pleasures. When he has reached the age of eighteen he accompanies his father to Florence, in order that he might know the road in case it was necessary for him to go alone. The young man admires the beautiful palaces and the splendors of the city, but when he observes a group of women his curiosity is aroused and he inquires what they are. The father bids him cast down his eyes, and tells him that they are called goslings and are not to be seen. From that time on, the youth pays no further attention to the attractions of Florence, but insists that he should be allowed to take a gosling with him to the hermitage. This tale has many parallels in different languages.

No tale of Boccaccio has been so often translated and imitated as this First Story, which

in English is best known in the *Sigismunda and Guiscardo* of Dryden. A beautiful painting attributed to Correggio is still in existence, and represents Sigismunda weeping over the heart of her lover. The English painter Hogarth used the same subject. Briefly the tale is this:

Ghismonda (Sigismunda), the only daughter and heiress of Tancred, was given in marriage to a son of the Duke of Capua, but, being left a widow, she soon returned to her father, where she fell in love with Guiscardo, one of her father's pages, revealed to him her passion, and by stratagem introduced him to her apartment through a secret grotto with which it communicated. Tancred, who visited his daughter frequently, one time entered the room and, finding her absent, reclined on a couch in the corner and fell asleep. Unfortunately it was the hour that Ghismonda had selected for one of her meetings with the page, and the father became an unwilling witness to her crime. The next day he upbraided her violently, but she defended herself on the ground of her love and claimed that the merits of her lover were sufficient to overcome the advantages of birth and wealth that some of her other suitors possessed. In order to bring her to her senses, Tancred slew Guiscardo, put his heart in a golden cup, and sent it to Ghismonda, who, having learned the fate of her lover, brewed a poisonous draft, poured it in the cup with the heart, and drank to her death.

From Painting by Wagrez

THE DECAMERON

4. Fourth Day. *Ninth Story.* Two nobles who were intimate friends lived in neighboring castles of Provence. Guiliemo Rossilione, the one, suspecting relations which existed between his wife and his friend, Guiliemo Guardastagno, invited him to his residence, but met him on the way and murdered him. Then he opened his victim's breast, took out his heart, and carried it home wrapped in the pennon of his lance. Arriving there, he dismounted, gave the heart to his cook to dress, telling her that it was the heart of a wild boar and must be served with greatest skill at supper that night. When the heart appeared on the table, the husband pleaded a lack of appetite, and the guilty wife devoured the whole hideous repast. When she had finished, her husband told her what she had eaten, whereupon, declaring that no other food should ever profane the relics of so noble a knight, she threw herself from the window and was dashed to pieces.

5. Fifth Day. *First Story.* In the island of Cyprus lived Aristippus, who had been favored with wealth, honor and every good thing the gods could give, excepting one. He had two sons, and one of them, a handsome fellow in person, named Galeso, was an imbecile, known by the nickname Cimon, which in his language meant *the beast.* Despairing of making anything of the boy, his father sent him to a country seat, where Cimon lived among the slaves and laborers, to his own intense satisfaction. After a long season with the servants,

Cimon was one day wandering through a thicket, when he perceived a beautiful young woman lying asleep by a fountain; after gazing in stupid admiration for some time, he awakened her and conducted her home. He did not return to the farm, but went at once to his father's mansion and applied for instructors, saying that he proposed to devote himself assiduously to study. So well did he accomplish his work under the excellent tutors that were furnished him that within four years he had become an accomplished gentleman and a profound philosopher. Not until the end of that time did he ask the hand of the young lady, whose name was Iphigenia, and only then he learned that she was affianced to Pasimunda, a young man of Rhodes.

When the vessel which conveyed Iphigenia to her intended husband set sail, it was followed by Cimon, who, with some of his companions, attacked it, and obtaining possession of his lady love, sailed for Crete; but a heavy storm coming up, he was compelled to put in at a bay in the island of Rhodes, where his ship was in turn seized by the sailors he had so lately attacked. In consequence, Cimon and his friends found themselves in prison, while preparations were being made for the marriage of Pasimunda with Iphigenia and also of a brother of Pasimunda with Cassandra, a young lady of Rhodes. Now, it so happened that Lysimachus, the chief magistrate of the island, was in love with Cassandra and, resolving to

carry her off before the wedding, associated Cimon in the enterprise, prepared a vessel, attacked the house, murdered the bridegrooms and set sail for Crete with the stolen brides. There they remained until the outcry was over, when Lysimachus returned to Rhodes with Cassandra, and Cimon carried Iphigenia to Cyprus.

This story, which may have had its origin in one of the idyls of Theocritus, has been many times translated and was imitated by Dryden in his *Cimon and Iphigenia,* though the latter has represented Iphigenia as attached to Cimon and not the suffering object of a cruel passion, such as the original tale depicts her.

6. Fifth Day. *Ninth Story.* The following story has been very popular with writers of modern times. It is the *Faucon* of La Fontaine, and furnished our Longfellow with one of his *Tales of a Wayside Inn,* the *Falcon of Sir Federigo.* Of the story it has been remarked: "As a picture of the habitual workings of some one powerful feeling, where the heart reposes almost entirely on itself, without the violent excitement of opposing duties or untoward circumstances, nothing ever came up to the story of Federigo and his Falcon. The perseverance in attachment, the spirit of gallantry and generosity displayed in it, has no parallel in the history of heroical sacrifices. The feeling is so unconscious, too, and involuntary, is brought out in such small, unlooked-

for and unostentatious circumstances, as to show it to have been woven into the very nature and soul of the author."

The tale is as follows: Federigo, a young Florentine renowned for courage and courtesy, fell in love with a gentlewoman named Madam Giovanna, one of the fairest and sprightliest ladies in Florence. In order to win her love he gave jousts and entertainments so lavishly that he wasted all his property in his fruitless siege and finally retained but one of all his precious possessions, namely, a brave falcon, known as one of the most skillful hunters in Italy. Despairing of success, Federigo retired to an old castle near the country seat of Madam Giovanna. In the meantime, her husband had died and left her with a large property and a son, of whom she was passionately fond and whom she took with her to this country seat. One day while they were wandering in the grounds, the lad met Federigo, who was hunting with his falcon, and became possessed of an ungovernable wish to own the bird. The boy fell sick, and all through his illness he cried for the bird, until the mother was driven into an attempt to secure it. She sent word to the knight that the next day she would call to take dinner with him, and he, in the joy of his heart and anxious to do all he could in his straightened circumstances to entertain her, slew the beloved bird and had it served at the dinner. Afterward, when Giovanna made known the real reason of her visit and asked

for the bird, Federigo was compelled to tell her the truth, and she was so moved by his devotion that she gave him her love, and the two were united for a happy life.

7. Sixth Day. *Fourth Story.* Many of the stories are humorous, and most of them possess humorous touches. The following is a good example of one of the more amusing of the clean stories:

Currado, a citizen of Florence, having captured a crane one day, ordered it served for his dinner. The cook, having prepared the bird for the table, was persuaded by one of his sweethearts to cut off a leg of the fowl and give it to her. When the bird was served in this mutilated form, Currado was terribly exasperated, and the cook, at a loss to defend himself, finally insisted that no crane had more than one leg. The master then assured the cook that unless he produced before noon of the next day another crane with only one leg he should suffer death. The next morning the cook and the master started out to find the one-legged crane, and the cook, half dead with terror, was delighted when he saw standing on the margin of the river a number of cranes with one of their legs drawn up as is customary with the birds. "There, master," said the cook, "what did I tell you? Didn't I speak the truth?" "Wait a minute," said Currado. Then riding nearer he cried out, "Shough, shough!" with all his might and away flew the cranes with their two legs extended behind

them. "What do you say now?" said the master, "Have they not two legs?" "Yes, yes," answered the cook, "but last night you didn't shout 'Shough, shough' to the crane that was at supper; if you had done so, doubtless it would have thrust out its other leg like these fellows."

8. NINTH DAY. *Ninth Story.* At the conclusion of the seventh day we are told that before supper Dionio and Fiammetta sang the story of Palamon and Arcite, which is the subject of Boccaccio's poem, the *Theside,* Chaucer's *Knight's Tale,* Fletcher's *Drama of the Two Noble Kinsmen,* and the *Palamon and Arcite* of Dryden. Few stories have been honored in the telling by such geniuses.

The ninth story of the ninth day is an amusing version of one phase of the old proverb, "A dog, a woman and a walnut tree, the more you beat 'em, the better they be:" Two young men go to Jerusalem to consult Solomon. One wishes to learn how he may cause himself to be loved; the other wishes to know how to manage an obstreperous wife. Solomon advises the first one to love others, and the second one to proceed to the goose bridge. Unable to understand this last counsel, the two young men return home, and on their way meet a number of caravans and mules upon the structure called the "goose bridge." Here one of the mules balks, and its master is beating it brutallywith a stick,when the youngmen interfere. He tells them, however, that it is his mule, and

he knows more about managing it than they do, and continues the beating. After a little the mule moves on in perfect docility. The young husband takes the suggestion to heart, and when he returns home beats his wife so vigorously that ever after she is submissive and kind. The friend meets with equal success in following Solomon's advice to him.

9. Tenth Day. *First Story.* One of the old tales that had previously appeared in a number of different forms and with the characters differently named is the following:

Ruggieri, an Italian noble, entered the service of Alfonzo, King of Spain, where, finding, as he thinks, every one more liberally rewarded than himself, he asks permission to return to his own country. The King accedes to his request and presents him with a fine mule for the journey, at the same time directing one of his attendants to follow Ruggieri and watch to see if he makes any complaint about the treatment he had received, and if so, to bring him back promptly. On the way they reach a river which the mule refuses to cross, whereupon Ruggieri exclaims, "You are like the man who gave you to me." Taken back to the capital and introduced to the King, the latter asks why he has been compared to a mule. "Because," replies Ruggieri, "the mule would not stop where it ought, and stood still when it should have gone on; in like manner, you give where it is not suitable and withhold where you ought to bestow." The King then takes the Italian

into a hall and shows him two shut coffers which look exactly alike, but whose contents are very different, for one contains nothing but earth, while the other holds the King's crown and scepter and a great quantity of precious gems. Alfonzo tells Ruggieri, who is ignorant of the contents of the two coffers, to make his choice, and the latter unluckily chooses the one containing the earth. Then the King explains to Ruggieri that it is bad fortune that has all along prevented him from partaking in the benefits the King has had to offer.

10. Tenth Day. *Fifth Story.* This old tale is the origin of the frankelyn's tale in Chaucer, of the whole of the twelfth canto in the *Orlando Innamorato,* and, through Chaucer, of the *Triumph of Honor,* one of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher. There is a Turkish version of the tale also, which differs but little from that of the *Decameron.*

Dianora, the wife of a wealthy man of Udina, was much troubled by the importunities of a lover Ansaldo, and in an effort to get rid of his attentions told a messenger that she would grant the requests of his master if he could produce then, in January, a garden as fresh and blooming as if it were in the month of May. A more impossible condition would be hard to conceive, but Ansaldo secured the aid of a necromancer and accomplished the task in an instant. When Dianora saw the exquisite garden, she was filled with terror and alarm, and not knowing what else to do, made a clean

breast of everything to her husband. He commanded her to keep the word she had pledged, and so the heart-broken wife found her way to Ansaldo and told him that she was there at the command of her husband. Ansaldo was so touched by her affliction and the generosity of her husband that he refused the offer and sent her back home, while the necromancer, who happened to observe all the circumstances, declined to accept the very heavy payment which had been stipulated for his services.

11. Tenth Day. *Eighth Story.* This long story was not original with Boccaccio, but he improved greatly upon it and left it so finished that it ranks high among the serious Italian novels, and the eulogy on friendship which closes the tale is regarded by many as the most eloquent passage in the *Decameron.* The story has been used as the basis of new tales by several English and French authors of importance. In substance it is this:

Titus, the son of a Roman patrician, resided while in the university at Athens in the home of Chremes, a friend of his father, and formed a very warm friendship with Gisippus, the son of Chremes. They studied together, played together, and were not happy except in each other's society. After the death of his father, Gisippus, persuaded by his friends to marry, selected Sophronia, an exquisitely-beautiful Athenian lady, and before the day of the wedding took Titus with him to visit her. The Roman youth was smitten with a violent love

for Sophronia, and after a period of internal conflicts finally exposed the state of his feelings to Gisippus. So disinterested was the love of Gisippus for his friend that he resigned his pretensions to Sophronia, and on the night of the marriage, Sophronia, in ignorance, received Titus as her husband. She and her family were at first greatly exasperated by the deception, but they were afterwards pacified, and Sophronia went to Rome with Titus, who had been summoned there on account of the death of his father.

Soon after, Gisippus was reduced to abject poverty, and hoping to receive assistance from his friend, made his way to Rome, where he arrived in such a miserable plight that Titus passed him in the street without recognizing him. Gisippus, however, thought that Titus had seen and recognized him, and in despair hurried off into a low part of the city, where he was accidentally the witness of a murder, and in the depths of despair publicly accused himself as the murderer. Titus recognized his friend when he was on trial, and finding no other way of saving him, declared that he himself was the guilty party. It so happened that the real murderer was present and heard this contest between the two friends, each of whom was trying to take the blame of a murder neither had committed, and was so affected by remorse and pity that he acknowledged his crime, and the two friends were set at liberty. By the influence of Titus, the confessed felon

was pardoned, and Gisippus, having married the sister of Titus, reëstablished his fortune and settled in Rome. The passage on friendship with which the tale closes is thus translated by Flameng:

A most sacred thing, then, is friendship, and worthy not only of especial reverence, but to be commended with perpetual praise, as the most discreet mother of magnanimity and honor, the sister of gratitude and charity and the enemy of hatred and avarice, still, without waiting to be entreated, ready virtuously to do unto others that which it would have done to itself. Nowadays its divine effects are very rarely to be seen in any twain, by the fault and to the shame of the wretched cupidity of mankind, which, regarding only its own profit, hath relegated it to perpetual exile, beyond the extremest limits of the earth. What love, what riches, what kinship, what, except friendship, could have made Gisippus feel in his heart the ardor, the tears and the sighs of Titus with such efficacy as to cause him to yield up to his friend his betrothed bride, fair and gentle and beloved of him? What laws, what menaces, what fears could have enforced the young arms of Gisippus to abstain, in solitary places and in dark, nay, in his very bed, from the embraces of the fair damsel, she mayhap bytimes inviting him, had friendship not done it? What honors, what rewards, what advancements, what, indeed, but friendship, could have made Gisippus reck not of losing his own kinsfolk and those of Sophronia nor of the unmannerly clamors of the populace nor of scoffs and insults, so but he might pleasure his friend? On the other hand, what, but friendship, could have prompted Titus, whenas he might fairly have feigned not to see, unhesitatingly to compass his own death, that he might deliver Gisippus from the cross, to which he had of his own motion procured himself to be condemned? What else could have made Titus, without the least demur, so

liberal in sharing his most ample patrimony with Gisippus, whom fortune had bereft of his own? What else could have made him so forward to vouchsafe his sister to his friend, albeit he saw him very poor and reduced to the extreme of misery? Let men, then, covet a multitude of comrades, troops of brethren and children galore and add, by dint of monies, to the number of their servitors, considering not that every one of these, who and whatsoever he may be, is more fearful of every least danger of his own than careful to do away the great from father or brother or master, whereas we see a friend do altogether the contrary.

12. Tenth Day. *Tenth Story.* Perhaps the most celebrated tale in the *Decameron* is the following, which is known under the name *The Patient Griselda.* The original form cannot be exactly established, but it appeared long before the time of Boccaccio and was known to some of his contemporaries before he wrote it himself. Its popularity was immediate, and in the fourteenth century French translations were numerous. Petrarch read it admiringly and translated it into Latin; Chaucer borrowed it from Petrarch, and it appears as the Clerk's story in the *Canterbury Tales;* it was used by the comedians in Paris, by poets, by English and Italian dramatists, and always with great popularity. It is as follows:

Galtier, Marquis of Salluzzo, having been solicited by his friends to marry, chose Griselda, the daughter of one of his vassals, a mere peasant. Soon after their marriage he conceived the idea of making a trial of her temper, and habitually addressed her in the

harshest language. This ill treatment he kept up for years. When a son and a daughter were born to them, he persuaded her that he had caused both to be murdered because his vassals would not consent to be ruled by the descendant of a peasant. Then he procured a fictitious divorce, and sent his wife back to the cottage of her father. Lastly, he recalled her to the palace to put it in order and to officiate at his marriage to a second wife. During all these terrible trials Griselda preserved a patient, loving attitude toward her husband, and even when she met the lady whom she supposed to be her successor, she tried to appear patient and resigned. This, however, was the end of her sufferings, for the lady proved to be her own daughter; her son, who had by this time grown to be a fine young man, was restored to her; and for the rest of her life she was rewarded by the redoubled and no longer disguised affection of her husband.

VII. Imitators of Boccaccio. 1. *Sacchetti.* Stories as popular as those of Boccaccio naturally were imitated by a host of writers, of whom the earliest of importance was Franco Sacchetti, a Florentine, who flourished in the latter half of the fourteenth century. His *Novels and Tales* would hardly be popular at the present time, for they lack the dramatic power of the stories in the *Decameron* and really possess only the interest that is given by the pure and easy style that all critics seem to allow him. Many of the Italian authors claim

that most of the incidents which Sacchetti relates actually occurred. A great number of the tales are merely accounts of foolish tricks performed by Buffalmacco, the painter, and played on Messer Dolcibene and Alberto da Siena, who seem to have been the butts of that period. A few examples show the trifling nature of many of the anecdotes.

One day a blacksmith, who was bawling out the verses of Dante, was overheard by the poet, who happened to be passing and who, moved by his anger, caught the tools and utensils of the wretched singer and threw them away. When the blacksmith complained, Dante replied, "I am only doing to your tools what you do to my verses. I will leave you unmolested if you will stop spoiling my productions."

Some one, having come unasked to a feast and being reproved for his boldness by some of the other guests, replied that it was not his fault that he was not invited.

A boy of fourteen, who surprised his auditors by his remarkable brilliancy, was told by a sarcastic listener that the folly of men is usually in proportion to the sense of their childhood. "Then," replied the youth, "you must have been a person of extraordinary intelligence in your infancy."

A Florentine buffoon, seeing a senator and a ragged and villainous individual quarreling while the spectators looked on without interference, offered to act as umpire in the difficulty. His offer was accepted and, without

hearing any evidence, he decided in favor of the rascal on the ground that where two persons differing so much in appearance were engaged in a quarrel, the onlookers would take the part of the well-dressed man if he had the least shadow of right.

Philip of Valois lost a favorite falcon, which was captured by a peasant, who recognized the *fleur-de-dis* engraved on the bells and brought the bird to the palace. The usher, however, would not admit the peasant until he had promised to share the reward equally. When the peasant presented the bird to the King, he asked that his reward might be fifty blows with the King's baton, half of which were for himself and the other half for the usher. This plan was carried out, but it is said that the peasant was suitably rewarded afterward in a private manner.

2. *Ser Giovanni.* The next novelist of importance was Ser Giovanni, whose tales, although written in the latter part of the fourteenth century, were not published until near the middle of the sixteenth. The work of Ser Giovanni was called *Il Pecorone* (*The Dunce*), and consists of a series of fifty tales fitted into a frame, of which the following is an outline:

A young man of Florence named Oretto fell in love with a nun in a convent at Forli from the reports he had received of her. In order to have frequent opportunities of meeting her, he repaired to the town and became a monk of the same order as hers. Oretto was soon ap-

pointed chaplain of the convent, and in that capacity had the liberty of paying daily visits to his mistress, and at length it was agreed that at each of these visits each should tell a story, a practice which continued for twenty-five days. Few of the stories are original, though many of them are said to have been accounts of events which actually happened. Still more are old tales revamped, and a few of them have been the inspiration of later tales in English and French. Sketches of a few may be interesting:

A student of Bologna requested his master to instruct him in the art of love, and the learned doctor advised the youth to go to a certain church to observe the ladies there and report to him by whose beauty he was chiefly captivated. It so happened that the wife of his master was the lady of his choice, but when he returned he gave such rapturous descriptions of the beauty of the woman that the doctor failed to recognize her as his wife, nor did the student know who she was. Day by day the doctor gave his instructions; the student profited by them, and reported upon his successes. At length, however, the doctor grew a little suspicious of his wife and returned home at the hour when he knew the student was to keep an appointment, but the wife heard the husband coming and concealed her lover beneath a pile of linen so that he escaped detection. The next day, however, the student gleefully related the incident to the doctor.

This tale is particularly interesting, as it is the foundation of some of the scenes in Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor.*

A number of the tales are simply repetitions of those in the *Decameron,* but here is a brief one which was the inspiration of at least one English novel that was popular in its day: A son on his death-bed wrote to his mother to send him a shirt made by the happiest woman in the town where she lived. The mother set out on her search for the happiest woman, and finally found her in the person of the most poverty-stricken and suffering individual in the city and in so doing she found consolation for the loss of her son, as he had intended.

Another story which contains part of Shakespeare's plot of *The Merchant of Venice* appeared in the *Gesta Romanorum* and in many other forms. A young man named Giannotto was adopted by Ansaldo, a rich Venetian merchant, and obtained permission to go to Alexandria with richly-laden ships. On the voyage he entered the port of Belmont, heard there of a lady of great wealth who announced that she would give herself in marriage to the man who could enjoy her company. Giannotto entered the contest and was entertained in the palace, but, having drunk quantities of drugged wine, he fell asleep, and the next morning, according to the stipulated conditions, his vessel was confiscated. He returned to Venice, procured another ship and came back to Belmont, only to meet with a similar experience.

The third time he was unable to procure a ship until he had borrowed ten thousand ducats from a Jew on condition that if he failed to repay within a certain time the Jew be allowed to take a pound of flesh from his body. On the third trip Giannotto's adventure was successful, as, having received a tip from the waiting-maid, he refrained from drinking wine. Occupied with his wife, he forgot to return to Venice at the allotted time, and the Jew insisted on the exact payment of the bond, although he was offered ten times the amount of the money. At this crisis the newly-married wife arrived in Venice disguised as a lawyer, and announced that she had come to decide difficult causes. The case was presented to her, and her decision was that the Jew had a right to his pound of flesh, but that he should be beheaded if he shed one drop of blood from his debtor. When Giannotto offered to pay the lawyer he demanded a ring which the lady of Belmont had presented to him, and later on she bantered him for having parted with it.

Some of the tales are instances of the blackest and most dreadful forms of Italian jealousy. In one, a husband invites the relatives of his wife and of his wife's lover to an entertainment and has them all beaten to death. Afterward the lady was tied to the dead body of her lover and left there until she expired.

From the following tale the principal part of Chaucer's Man of Lawes' tale is taken: The Princess Denise of France, to avoid a dis-

agreeable marriage with an old German Prince, escaped to England and was received in a convent there. The English King, having fallen in love with the Princess and married her, went to war in Scotland, and while he was gone his wife was delivered of twins; but the Queen Mother, who sent word to her son, declared that his wife had brought forth two monsters. The father gave orders that the monsters should be brought up with the utmost care, but the Queen Mother substituted a command for their destruction, as well as for that of the Queen herself. The person to whom the duty of disposing of the three was committed hesitated to perform so atrocious a deed, and allowed the three to depart to Genoa. Some years later, the mother and her children met the King of England at Rome on his way to join a crusade and, having declared herself and exhibited the children, she was brought back in triumph to her home in England.

VIII. The First Decline of Italian Literature. From the middle of the fourteenth to the middle of the fifteenth century there was so great a decline in Italian literature that nothing comparable to the great masterpieces of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio was offered. Very little of first-class poetry or prose was composed. It is difficult to assign this sudden decline to its proper cause. It must be admitted that Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio were in their way far better than any of their contemporaries, and that the excellence and

beauty of their work did not argue a general literary skill, so that there were no immediate successors who were able to carry out their work. Moreover, the very enthusiasm for the study of the dead languages which they created was in itself destructive to Italian literature, for the best and most wideawake minds contented themselves with a lifelong study of Greek and Latin and neglected the vernacular in which our three great writers had achieved fame. Perhaps too, the terrors of the Black Death, the loss in that awful catastrophe of so many brilliant lives and the terrible political upheavals that were coincident with it, all had their effect in causing the remarkable degeneracy.

Toward the close of the fifteenth century, however, a new light began to shine, for the consideration of which we must reserve another chapter, but before beginning on that, there are perhaps two poets who lived during the period of decline that should be considered worthy of brief mention. We refer to Sacchetti and to Fazio degli Uberti, a Florentine, of whom we know little but whose geographical epic, the *Discourses of the World,* was an easy and fluent work which has attracted the attention of many English critics. His truest poetry, however, is lyrical, and one canzone is so fine that it has frequently been ascribed to Dante. This, his portrait of his lady Angiola of Verona, is thus translated by Rossetti:

I look at the crisp golden-threaded hair
Whereof, to thrall my heart, Love twists a net;
Using at times a string of pearls for bait,
And sometimes with a single rose therein.
I look into her eyes which unaware
Through mine own eyes to my heart penetrate;
Their splendor that is excellently great,
To the sun's radiance seeming near akin,
Yet from herself a sweeter light to win.
So that I, gazing on that lovely one,
Discourse in this wise with my secret thought:—
"Woe's me! why am I not,
Even as my wish, alone with her alone?—
That hair of hers, so heavily uplaid,
To shed down braid by braid,
And make myself two mirrors of her eyes
Within whose light all other glory dies."

I look at the amorous beautiful mouth,
The spacious forehead which her locks enclose,
The small white teeth, the straight and shapely nose,
And the clear brows of a sweet penciling.
And then the thought within me gains full growth,
Saying, "Be careful that thy glance now goes
Between her lips, red as an open rose,
Quite full of every dear and precious thing:
And listen to her gracious answering,
Born of the gentle mind that in her dwells,
Which from all things can glean the nobler half.
Look thou when she doth laugh
How much her laugh is sweeter than aught else."
Thus evermore my spirit makes avow
Touching her mouth; till now
I would give anything that I possess,
Only to hear her mouth say frankly, "Yes."

I look at her white easy neck, so well
From shoulders and from bosom lifted out;
And at her round cleft chin, which beyond doubt

No fancy in the world could have design'd.
And then, with longing grown more voluble,
"Were it not pleasant now," pursues my thought,
"To have that neck within thy two arms caught
And kiss it till the mark were left behind?"
Then, urgently: "The eyelids of thy mind
Open thou: if such loveliness be given
To sight here,—what of that which she doth hide?
Only the wondrous ride
Of sun and planets through the visible heaven
Tells us that there beyond is Paradise.
Thus, if thou fix thine eyes,
Of a truth certainly thou must infer
That every earthly joy abides in her."

I look at the large arms, so lithe and round,—
At the hands, which are white and rosy too,—
At the long fingers, clasp'd and woven through,
Bright with the ring which one of them doth wear.
Then my thought whispers: "Were thy body wound
Within those arms, as loving women's do,
In all thy veins were born a life made new
Which thou couldst find no language to declare.
Behold if any picture can compare
With her just limbs, each fit in shape and size,
Or match her angel's color like a pearl.
She is a gentle girl
To see; yet when it needs, her scorn can rise.
Meek, bashful, and in all things temperate,
Her virtue holds its state;
In whose least act there is that gift express'd
Which of all reverence makes her worthiest."

Soft as a peacock steps she, or as a stork
Straight on herself, taller and statelier:
'Tis a good sight how every limb doth stir
For ever in a womanly sweet way.
"Open thy soul to see God's perfect work,"
(My thought begins afresh), "and look at her

When with some lady-friend exceeding fair
She bends and mingles arms and locks in play.
Even as all lesser lights vanish away,
When the sun moves, before his dazzling face,
So is this lady brighter than all these.
How should she fail to please,—
Love's self being no more than her loveliness?
In all her ways some beauty springs to view;
All that she loves to do
Tends alway to her honor's single scope;
And only from good deeds she draws her hope."

Song, thou canst surely say, without pretense,
That since the first fair woman ever made,
Not one can have display'd
More power upon all hearts than this one doth;
Because in her are both
Loveliness and the soul's true excellence:—
And yet (woe's me!) is pity absent thence.

We have already seen something of the novelettes of Sacchetti, but it would be an injustice to him not to mention the beauty of his lyrical poetry, which was highly popular long before his tales had been published. The following charming ballata is translated by Rossetti:

"Ye graceful peasant-girls and mountain-maids,
Whence come ye homeward through these evening shades?"

"We come from where the forest skirts the hill;
A very little cottage is our home,
Where with our father and our mother still
We live, and love our life, nor wish to roam.
Back every evening from the field we come
And bring with us our sheep from pasturing there."

"Where, tell me, is the hamlet of your birth,
Whose fruitage is the sweetest by so much?
Ye seem to me as creatures worship-worth,
The shining of your countenance is such.
No gold about your clothes, coarse to the touch,
Nor silver; yet with such an angel's air!

"I think your beauties might make great complaint
Of being thus shown over mount and dell;
Because no city is so excellent
But that your stay therein were honorable.
In very truth, now, does it like ye well
To live so poorly on the hill-side here?"

"Better it liketh one of us, pardie,
Behind her flock to seek the pasture-stance,
Far better than it liketh one of ye
To ride unto your curtain'd rooms and dance.
We seek no riches neither golden chance
Save wealth of flowers to weave into our hair."

Ballad, if I were now as once I was,
I'd make myself a shepherd on some hill,
And, without telling any one, would pass
Where these girls went, and follow at their will;
And "Mary" and "Martin" we would murmur still,
And I would be for ever where they were.

His characteristic playfulness is shown in the two following catches:

ON A FINE DAY

"Be stirring, girls! we ought to have a run:
Look, did you ever see so fine a day?
Fling spindles right away,
And rocks and reels and wools:
Now don't be fools,—
To-day your spinning's done.
Up with you, up with you!" So, one by one,
They caught hands, catch who can,
Then singing, singing, to the river they ran,

They ran, they ran,
To the river, the river;
And the merry-go-round
Carries them at a bound
To the mill o'er the river.
"Miller, miller, miller,
Weigh me this lady
And this other. Now steady!"
"You weigh a hundred, you,
And this one weighs two."
"Why, dear, you do get stout!"
"You think so, dear, no doubt:
Are you in a decline?"
"Keep your temper, and I'll keep mine."
"Come, girls," ("O thank you, miller!")
"We'll go home when you will."
So, as we cross'd the hill,
A clown came in great grief
Crying, "Stop thief! stop thief!
O what a wretch I am!"
"Well, fellow, here's a clatter!
Well, what's the matter?"
"O Lord, O Lord, the wolf has got my lamb!"
Now at that word of woe,
The beauties came and clung about me so
That if wolf had but shown himself, may be
I too had caught a lamb that fled to me.

ON A WET DAY

As I walk'd thinking through a little grove,
Some girls that gather'd flowers kept passing me,
Saying, "Look here! look there!" delightedly.
"Oh, here it is!" "What's that?" "A lily, love."
"And there are violets!"
"Further for roses! Oh, the lovely pets—
The darling beauties! Oh, the nasty thorn!
Look here, my hand's all torn!"
"What's that that jumps?" "Oh, don't! it's a grasshopper!"

"Come run, come run,
Here's bluebells!" "Oh, what fun!"
"Not that way! Stop her!"
"Yes, this way!" "Pluck them, then!"
"Oh, I've found mushrooms! Oh, look here!" "Oh, I'm
Quite sure that further on we'll get wild thyme."
"Oh, we shall stay too long, it's going to rain!
There's lightning, oh, there's thunder!"
"Oh, shan't we hear the vesper-bell, I wonder?"
"Why, it's not nones, you silly little thing;
And don't you hear the nightingales that sing
Fly away O die away?"
"I feel so funny! Hush!"
"Why, where? what is it then?" "Ah! in that bush!"

So every girl here knocks it, shakes and shocks it,
Till with the stir they make
Out skurries a great snake.
"O Lord! O me! Alack! Ah, me! alack!"
They scream, and then all run and scream again,
And then in heavy drops down comes the rain.

Each running at the other in a fright,
Each trying to get before the other, and crying
And flying, stumbling, tumbling, wrong or right;
One sets her knee
There where her foot should be;
One has her hands and dress
All smother'd up with mud in a fine mess;
And one gets trampled on by two or three.
What's gather'd is let fall
About the wood and not pick'd up at all.
The wreaths of flowers are scatter'd on the ground;
And still as screaming, hustling without rest
They run this way and that and round and round,
She thinks herself in luck who runs the best.

I stood quite still to have a perfect view,
And never noticed till I got wet through.

CHAPTER XI

SECOND PERIOD

1476–1675

LORENZO DE' MEDICI; POLITIAN

THE RENAISSANCE. Renaissance, which means literally *new birth,* is the name now generally given to that very general movement which marks the beginning of modern European civilization. It was confined to no one nation, but at the end of the Middle Ages spread from Italy through France, Spain, England and Germany and changed the whole manner of life and thought of all the peoples. In religion, in art, in letters, in natural science, in civics, and even in

ethics, the revolution was remarkable; its causes and effects have been the engrossing study of scientists ever since, and it is certain that all phases of the movement are not understood even at the present time, so great is its complexity.

Different writers have defined it in different terms; for instance, Mr. E. A. Armstrong describes it as "the emancipation of the individual from the bondage of circumstances." J. A. Symonds, a high authority on medieval questions, says, "The history of the Renaissance is the history of the attainment of self-conscious freedom by the human spirit, manifested in the European races;" and in another place, "What the word Renaissance really means is the new birth to liberality—the spirit of mankind recovering consciousness, and the power of self-determination recognizing the beauty of the outer world and of the body through art, liberating the reason in science and the conscience in religion, restoring culture to the intelligence and establishing the principle of political freedom."

E. L. S. Horsburgh, in his *Lorenzo the Magnificent,* says:

> The concrete facts which we associate with the Renaissance Age—the discovery of a new world, the discovery of the laws which govern the solar system of the universe, the invention of printing, the revived use of the compass, the rediscovery of the scope and purpose of Art, the movement which culminated in the Reformation, the scientific, and pseudoscientific speculations of Paracelsus, the anatomical investigations of Michelangelo and

Vesalius, the discovery of the circulation of the blood by Harvey, the new philosophy of Bacon—these, and many others, are not to be regarded as phenomena appearing in isolation, disconnected from one another. All have their origin in one and the same impulse acting upon the mind of man, the impulse towards free and independent inquiry without regard to the standards and conventions which medievalism had formulated and imposed. We must therefore, if we would understand the Renaissance, disentangle it from its accidents. We must recognize it as being in its essence the working within the mind of a new spirit which in due course manifested itself in various forms of definite and concrete achievement.

Europe during the Middle Ages had a superstitious reverence for authority, and came near realizing the aim in union and centralization under a Pope or an emperor, or under the Pope and the emperor. The crusading spirit was possible, and the Crusades were possible because the crusaders fought primarily as Christians rather than as members of any particular nation. By the Renaissance all this was changed, and we see the beginnings of our modern nations, with their constant struggle to maintain the balance of power, which even to-day is far from being determined.

From another point of view the Renaissance may be considered as the return to the antique. We have already seen its early stages in that outburst of literature which marked the age of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. After those great spirits passed away there was in Italy a sudden and marked decline, which, however,

was more apparent than real, for the enlivening spirit of Greek culture was incessantly at work, and the people were gradually becoming ready for the final enlightenment which we date in Italy from the reign of Lorenzo the Magnificent. By the middle of the fifteenth century the Churches of the East and the West had come to a closer understanding, and the study of Greek literature was given an impetus in the West by high dignitaries, and after the fall of Constantinople in 1453 a continuous stream of Greeks began to move westward, carrying with it all the culture which had survived the Dark Ages, and found in Italy especially an enthusiastic reception. We cannot at this time give even a sketch of the effects of this wonderful birth, but, if we proceed with our study of literature in the various countries, we will meet continually with phases of the movement. In Italy particularly it affected every department of life and art, but overtopping all others, perhaps, was the spirit of aestheticism and the love of beauty in everything which manifested itself in the astonishing labors of painters, sculptors, architects and writers. Characteristic also was the sudden awakening to a realization of the joy of living, and the light-hearted worldliness, the lack of spirituality which characterized it often developed into a sensuality whose result was disastrous. Our first concern is with its manifestations under the patronage of Lorenzo de' Medici, the great Florentine, who more

From Painting by Bronzino, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

COSIMO DE' MEDICI

1389-1464

than any other one man fostered and encouraged the new learning in all its ramifications.

II. Lorenzo the Magnificent. In the chapter on the history of Italy we have read of Florence and the Medici family, and reference to that now will refresh the memory for what is to follow. Cosimo (Cosmo) de' Medici, who lived from 1389 to 1464, was himself a generous and enlightened patron of art and literature who instituted an academy for the study of Platonic philosophy, collected a number of priceless classical and Oriental manuscripts and gathered into his court some of the foremost painters, sculptors and scholars of the day. More illustrious, however, in this respect, and more famed for his generosity and munificence, was Lorenzo, who lived between 1449 and 1492. Lorenzo is one of the most interesting characters in history, for he combined in himself not only an ardent patriotism, a munificent generosity and a high quality of statesmanship, but he was a patron of letters and one of the best, if not the best, poet of his age. His life has been a fascinating study to many good writers, so there are a number of interesting biographies accessible to those who enjoy the reality of human endeavor. Much as we would like to sketch his character more fully here, we are compelled to treat only of his intimate relation to literature.

Before going more deeply into that question, however, let us call attention once more to the extraordinary events which occurred in the

year of his death. What Lorenzo's life meant to Italy may be best expressed in the words of Ferrante, written in 1492, immediately after the death of the great man: "His life has been long enough for his own deathless fame, but too short for Italy. May God grant, now that he is dead, that men will not attempt that which, while he was alive, they did not dare to do." The death of Lorenzo removed the last bulwark of Italian liberty and opened the way for the disastrous invasion of the French. It was in 1492 that Roderigo Borgia was elected Pope; it was in this year that Columbus discovered America; in which the Spanish nation completed the conquest of Granada; in which France for the first time was united under one king. The Renaissance then was under full swing, and in literature and art its motion had been accelerated to a wonderful degree by the activities of Lorenzo.

He founded an academy for the study of the antique that established Florence at the head of European culture and disseminated the knowledge of Latin and Greek over all Europe; he recognized at once the inestimable value of printing, seized upon the new invention with unbounded enthusiasm, and through Cristoforo Landino produced in Florence in 1481 the first printed edition of Dante's *Divine Comedy,* illustrated by twenty wood engravings. In other towns, it is true, earlier editions had been produced, but the work of Landino with its commentaries placed the Florentine

edition at the head and established the *Divine Comedy* in its thenceforth unchallenged place among the great classics of the world, and as well worth patient study as the works of Homer, Vergil or Plato. By the aid of John Lascaris, Lorenzo procured two hundred manuscripts from the monastery of Mount Athos which were destined to embellish the Laurentian Library, but this valuable heritage, together with the wonderful and unique collection of ancient sculpture, vases, etc., was broken up and partially destroyed when the French sacked the city under the rule of Lorenzo's incompetent son.

Lorenzo de' Medici was free from many of those abuses which were incident to the humanistic movement. The barren and soul-destroying passion for exact scholarship and the close adhesion to the rules of the ancients bred a class of pedantic writers who were no better than the old Schoolmen themselves, but Lorenzo and his immediate followers did not lose sight of the value of life and originality and were unwilling that dry formalism should take the place of inspiration. In him there was no straining after form until meaning was lost to sight, nor was there that blind devotion to the authority of Cicero, which failed to recognize as legitimate a word not found within the latter's works. Lorenzo's humanism was of a more liberal and enlightened type, and though an exact scholar himself, yet he never lost his love for his native Tuscan, and he wrote

principally in that tongue. He would not love Plato, for instance, solely as a means of aesthetic gratification, but rather because the great philosopher told him in what manner life should be lived, for Lorenzo was often heard to say that without a knowledge of the teachings of Plato it was impossible to be a good citizen and difficult to follow the teachings of Christ.

III. The Writings of Lorenzo de' Medici. The vastness of the debt which letters owes to the patronage of Lorenzo makes his writings, important as they are, appear insignificant in comparison; but in the philosopher, warrior, sensualist and scholar there was a vein of delicate sentiment and idyllic grace which appeared in his fanciful poems, of which the most elaborate are the *Ambra, La Caccia col Falcone,* a lively description of the aristocratic sport of hawking, and *La Nencia da Barberino.*

Lorenzo's erotic poetry consists chiefly of canzoni, which are elegant but have no great depth of feeling. The spirituality of the sonnets of Dante and Petrarch had departed, and in its place appeared a vivid realism which leaves no doubt as to the nature of the loves celebrated. The following is a fair example of his style:

Thy beauty, gentle Violet, was born
Where for the look of Love I first was fain,
And my bright stream of bitter tears was rain
That beauty to accomplish and adorn.
And such desire was from compassion born,

That from the happy nook where thou wert lain
The fair hand gathered thee, and not in vain,
For by my own it willed thee to be borne.
And, as to me appears, thou wouldst return
Once more to that fair hand, whence thee upon
My naked breast I have securely set:
The naked breast that doth desire and burn,
And holds thee in her heart's place, that hath gone
To dwell where thou wert late, my Violet.

Although many of Lorenzo's poems are licentious and seem to have been written to give pleasure to the gay set with whom he lived, yet the versatility of his genius had brought him into contact with life at so many points that he was able to sing the songs of a philosopher or a Christian as well as the love ditties of the rustics or the carnival revels. He took the artless compositions of the common people and, catching their spirit, raised them into masterpieces, and thus established the fact that the Tuscan vernacular was a fit medium for all thought, however complex and lofty or light and graceful. Of his own verses he speaks more modestly:

From this it is not to be inferred that I think my sonnets have attained to that perfection which belongs properly to such a form of verse. For me, it is sufficient to have made an attempt, and if I have not added to its perfections, or driven the chariot of the sun, yet let it be to me in place of praise that I have been ardent in my endeavors even though my strength has been insufficient for so great an enterprise.

Another example of his sonnets shows his method and a standard of art and feeling that

is similar at least to those of our great lyric writers:

Bright shining Star! Thy radiance in the sky
Dost rob the neighboring stars of all their light.
Why art thou with unwonted splendor bright?
Why with great Phoebus dost thou dare to vie?
Perchance those eyes which Death so cruelly—
Too daring Death—has ravished from our sight,
Have given to thee the glory of that light
Which can the chariot of the Sun defy.
Oh, new-created Star, if star thou art,
That Heaven with new-born splendors dost adorn,
I call on thee! Oh, Goddess, quickly hear!
Of thine own glory grant me now a part
To fire these eyes, with endless weeping worn,
With something of thy light that they can bear.

The *Selve d' Amore,* as the name implies, are miscellanies, or scrap-books of love, and in the two poems which have attracted the most attention Lorenzo expatiates on a variety of images which occur to a passionate lover during the absence of his mistress. They are graceful and correct, with a little more of cold classicism than appears in most of his other writings. The following brief quotation, taken alone, will give a very satisfactory idea of his style:

Oh, bright, love-laden eyes
That light with love a face divine,
Ye who shall gaze therein shall see
A thousand shapes of beauty shine.

If that the glory shall be hid
Of those twin lamps which shine so bright,
Fool would be he that then should claim

True beauty to have known aright.
Here only is true beauty found,
All wholly blent in one sweet face,
For other things of beauty take
Their glory only from her grace.

He who shall once that beauty prove
Must ever sigh for sweet eternal love.

The *Ambra* relates in the manner of Ovid a metamorphosis, and was intended to give a poetic origin to his beautiful villa, located on an eminence arising from the waters of the Ombrone River. Ambra was a beautiful nymph deeply loved by the shepherd Lauro and under the protection of Diana. One day as the nymph was bathing in the clear waters of the river, the god Ombrone, son of the Apennines, beholding her exquisite loveliness, became enamored and pursued her. "Her fears adding wings to her white feet," she fled before him until she reached the place where the Ombrone and the Arno meet. Here her pursuer called on his brother, the Arno, to stop her in the flight, but the nymph, falling upon her knees, prayed thus to Diana for protection:

Beauteous Diana! shall it not avail
  That never spot has stained this breast of mine?
Protect me. I, a Nymph, cannot prevail
  Against two foes, and each of them Divine.
Now as I die, no fears of death assail
  Save for the love I bear Lorenzo mine.
Carry, oh winds, to him my latest breath,
That he a little while shall mourn my death.

The sympathetic goddess interfered and changed her into the rock upon which the villa is built.

In *Corinto* the shepherd of the same name chants his despairing love for Galatea, but as she fails to answer he decides to commit his verses to writing and give them to the air, hoping in this way that they may reach her. In the delicate pictures that follow, modern poets have found inspiration:

And many a mingled garland would I twine
Of leaves and flowers to crown thy golden head,
But all their beauties fain must yield to thine.
The rivulet murmuring in its crystal bed
Would answer low to all our sweet delights
By songs of amorous birds accompanied.

His lady love, so swift and light that she can skim the surface of the water and not wet her feet, dances in and out of the poem, reflecting her face to him in the clear fountain, but as he approaches more closely he sees only his own heavier features, and in them, if not beauty, at least much strength and manly daring, for he does not fear to take the bull by the horns nor to contend with the maddened bear, and with a bow in hand he would enter a contest with Diana herself. Will Galatea not relent? Together they will have flocks and herds, fresh milk and strawberries, and honey which Olympian ambrosia cannot surpass, made from the labor of countless bees. If she always joins her cruelty to so much beauty, then Corinto must find his comfort in thinking that beauty

is a thing that fades. Then follows the passage for which the whole poem might have been composed:

Red and white roses bloomed upon the spray;
One opened, leaf by leaf, to greet the morn,
Shyly at first, then in sweet disarray;
Another, yet a youngling, newly born,
Scarce struggled from the bud, and there were some
Whose petals closed them from the air forlorn;
Another fell, and showered the grass with bloom;
Thus I beheld the roses dawn and die
And one short hour their loveliness consume.
But while I watched those languid petals lie
Colorless on cold earth, I could but think
How vain a thing is youthful bravery.

. . . . . .

Pluck the rose, therefore, maiden, while 'tis May!

The masterpiece of Lorenzo de' Medici is considered to be the *Nencia di Barberino,* in which, while the theme is not original, the dress is new and beautiful. Vallera, the lover, is a peasant with only the peasant's arts, while Nencia is a wayward beauty among the country lasses, but with all the coquetry and skilled disdain of one city-bred. In this poem almost for the first time a poet is unaffectedly natural and uses the language of the people as the one appropriate for the expression of their feelings. Heretofore high-flown language and elaborate myths have been the property of the pastoral. Lorenzo sees that the greasy peasants and their gayly-decked, red-cheeked maidens differ only in externals from the cultured classes, and *Nencia,* doubtless a satire intended

to create a laugh at rustic loves and rustic manners, in the end runs away with its creator, and he seems half in love with his bright-eyed, froward beauty. The chief merits of the poem lie in the adaptation of the language to the characters, in the ingenuity with which the writer selects the images and illustrations which a rustic would naturally use, and in the unaffected and unstudied art of its genuine poetry.

Nencia's rustic beauty has no equal, and with each flash of her eyes she throws a burning fagot of love:

> But never have I seen a girl so sweet
> Nor one so properly and well set up.
> Her two eyes seem to make it holiday
> Whene'er she lifts them or she looks at you.
> And just between, her shapely nose, as if
> Bored deftly with a little auger, rests.

The catalogue of her simple beauties continues, but then, though her eyes are so bright and her beauties so wonderful, her heart is of flint, and all around her are a troop of lovers, upon each of whom in turn she bestows her favoring glance, blind to the jealousy in Vallera's aching heart. When Nencia goes to mass on Sunday with her damask cloak and bright-colored petticoat, she is distracting, and when she labors in the fields or at the spinning wheel or in weaving baskets, there is no one who can eclipse her.

> She is white and soft just like the skin of lard,
> Whiter than is the flour from the corn,

More delicate than ice upon a pool, with the sweet yielding softness of a pudding.

So bewitched is Vallera that he is good for nothing; he cannot swallow a mouthful of food; he can scarcely wield his mattock; she has bound him with a hundred withes; he cannot sleep at night, and this very one has seemed a thousand years to him, for he rose long before day and stood an hour and a half beneath the baker's shop to think about his love. He can recall no other beauty on which he has not dwelt except the fresh charm in the dimple in her chin, which sheds its beauties over all her face. No answers can he get from her, either good or ill, and when he offers her a bunch of holly with its red berries just gathered from a tree, she suddenly has become too much of a lady to receive it. What joy to think of that April day when he first recognized her charms as he saw her gathering a salad, and what happiness now to see her tending her flocks or coming down with her pitcher to the stream! "O Nenciozza mia. I would go where the cattle drink, to the pool where I might see you as you ford the stream, and there, seated on the ground, await you as you cross. And, Nenciozza mia, I am going on Sunday as far as Florence to sell that bundle of fagots which yesterday I cut while the cattle grazed. I can buy something there for you: face paint, for instance, or a little paper full of bismuth, or a farthing's worth of pins and needles." He remembers how lightly she dances, touching

in turn each little shoe with her hand, skipping like a young goat, revolving smoothly as a mill wheel, and as she salutes her partner, "she makes a prettier courtesy by far than can any lady of the city." Oh, if she were not so perfect, if there might be some little defect which Vallera could remedy: a clasp for her gown, a few hooks or buttons, a band for her tresses, a coral necklace with a pendant, which he would be glad to buy if she would only tell him if the beads should be large or small. He has not been blind to the attentions of her other lovers, and she must beware, for his hand is strong. Still, she has only to put him to the proof and he will not be found wanting, for he will throw himself into the Sieve, beat his head against the wall, do anything for her. More than once he recapitulates her charms, as though words had failed him. For more than half an hour he has waited fruitlessly for her by the ford, while her wethers were crossing, and now he must go: Mona Masa calls him to bring in the cattle to their stalls and he must go, but he leaves his heart behind. Soon will she not go with him to a spot he knows close by where in a shaded valley he may lift her veil and see—

> Her so beauteous face
> To which all else about her so replies
> That she a little angel seems to me.

Now he is keeping for her a bird's nest, full of the prettiest little birds ever seen, and to-

morrow he will bring her a pancake. When she hears the music of his pipes, she will know that he is coming, well-dressed in a silk jerkin and stockings, and may be able to get her neighbors out of the way. Though his hair is long and shaggy and his beard rough because he cannot afford to pay the barber, yet he would shave much more frequently if he could count on his reward from Nencia. Her parents have put him off when he has claimed her, but sometime he will carry her off in spite of everything.

Again, he sees Nencia hurrying to the festival, adorned like a pearl, with six rings on her fingers, freshly rouged and painted, decked to "kill." Oh, if Nencia only knew the extent of his love and the sorrow which sets his teeth on edge, she would leave her other followers and love him alone. Yesterday when she came from the church he was quite dazzled, and when she tripped a little he was by her side in a moment, but she gave him only a sidelong glance, an arch smile, and ran away:

When I behold you, Nencia, blushing so
I'd gladly go a year without my food,
Only to see you ever thus bedecked.
Could I but then have had some talk with you
Then I should live contented all my life.
Could I have given your hand one little touch,
It would have seemed a golden touch for me.

Vallera loves her more than the moth loves the candle, more than a toper loves the tavern, and most girls would think themselves lucky to have a man so well-built and well-behaved,

but she treats him so ill that, if he could without pain, he would cut himself in two that she might see the word *Nencia* written on his heart, and if she touched the heart it would cry out "Nencia." But here come the cattle, and he must take care that through fooling none of them are left behind in the pasture. To Mona Masa calling, he cries: "All right! I'm coming as fast as I can. There's Nanni, now, who wants me to help her mix the must."

As has been intimated, Lorenzo did not hesitate to adapt to his use the popular poetry which flourished so vigorously outside of courtly and scholastic circles, and other poets, particularly Poliziano, refined this material into polite literature. Most important among these forms used by the better writers were the miracle play (*sacra rappresentazione*), the lyric to be sung while dancing (*ballata*), the carnival chorus (*canto carnascialesco*), the short love ditty (*rispetto*), the hymn (*lauda*), the May song (*maggio*) and the little part song (*madrigal*). Of several of these types we have already given examples, but at the risk of extending our consideration of Italian poetry to too great a length, we feel that we must quote a little further from Lorenzo and his friend and superior, Poliziano. Among the *canti carnascialeschi* two are of more than ordinary interest. The first, written by Lorenzo at the height of Italian independence and greatness, was sung with rollicking gayety by maskers representing Bacchus and his crew:

Fair is youth and void of sorrow;
But it hourly flies away.—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

This is Bacchus and the bright
Ariadne, lovers true!
They, in flying time's despite,
Each with each find pleasure new;
These their Nymphs, and all their crew
Keep perpetual holiday.—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

These blithe Satyrs, wanton-eyed,
Of the Nymphs are paramours:
Through the caves and forests wide
They have snared them mid the flowers;
Warmed with Bacchus, in his bowers,
Now they dance and leap alway.—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

These fair Nymphs, they are not loth
To entice their lovers' wiles.
None but thankless folk and rough
Can resist when Love beguiles.
Now enlaced, with wreathed smiles,
All together dance and play.—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

See this load behind them plodding
On the ass! Silenus he,
Old and drunken, merry, nodding,
Full of years and jollity;
Though he goes so swayingly,
Yet he laughs and quaffs alway.—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

Midas treads a wearier measure:
All he touches turns to gold:
If there be no taste of pleasure,
What's the use of wealth untold?
What's the joy his fingers hold,
When he's forced to thirst for aye?—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

Listen well to what we're saying;
Of to-morrow have no care!
Young and old together playing,
Boys and girls, be blithe as air!
Every sorry thought forswear!
Keep perpetual holiday.—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

Ladies and gay lovers young!
Long live Bacchus, live Desire!
Dance and play; let songs be sung;
Let sweet love your bosoms fire;
In the future come what may!—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day!
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

Fair is youth and void of sorrow;
But it hourly flies away.

The second was composed after Lorenzo's death by Antonio Alamanni, and was sung by maskers attired as skeletons and riding on a dark car of death, which had been designed by Lorenzo's son. Times had strangely altered, and, while in the jovial days of the Medici the streets of Florence had been filled with the gay carnival throngs, they now reëchoed with a cry

of penance, which Alamanni tried to fit into his song:

Sorrow, tears, and penitence
Are our doom of pain for aye:
This dead concourse riding by
Hath no cry but penitence!

E'en as you are, once were we:
You shall be as now we are:
We are dead men, as you see:
We shall see you dead men, where
Nought avails to take great care,
After sins, of penitence.

We too in the Carnival
Sang our love-songs through the town;
Thus from sin to sin we all
Headlong, heedless, tumbled down:—
Now we cry, the world around,
Penitence! oh, Penitence!

Senseless, blind, and stubborn fools!
Time steals all things as he rides:
Honors, glories, states, and schools,
Pass away, and nought abides;
Till the tomb our carcase hides,
And compels this penitence.

This sharp scythe you see us bear,
Brings the world at length to woe;
But from life to life we fare;
And that life is joy or woe:
All heaven's bliss on him doth flow
Who on earth does penitence.

Living here, we all must die;
Dying, every soul shall live:
For the King of kings on high

This fixed ordinance doth give:
Lo, you all are fugitive!
Penitence! Cry Penitence!

Torment great and grievous dole
Hath the thankless heart mid you;
But the man of piteous soul
Finds much honor in our crew:
Love for loving is the due
That prevents this penitence.

Sorrow, tears, and penitence
Are our doom of pain for aye:
This dead concourse riding by
Hath no cry but Penitence!

One type of the ballata is the following poem, which has been ascribed to Lorenzo, although there is doubt as to its real authorship:

Since you beg with such a grace,
How can I refuse a song,
Wholesome, honest, void of wrong,
On the follies of the place?

Courteously on you I call;
Listen well to what I sing:
For my roundelay to all
May perchance instruction bring,
And of life good lessoning.—
When in company you meet,
Or sit spinning, all the street
Clamors like a market-place.

Thirty of you there may be;
Twenty-nine are sure to buzz,
And the single silent she
Racks her brains about her coz:—
Mrs. Buzz and Mrs. Huzz,

Mind your work, my ditty saith;
Do not gossip till your breath
Fails and leaves you black of face!

Governments go out and in:—
You the truth must needs discover,
Is a girl about to win
A brave husband in her lover?—
Straight you set to talk him over:
"Is he wealthy?" "Does his coat
Fit?" "And has he got a vote?"
"Who's his father?" "What's his race?"

Out of window one head pokes;
Twenty others do the same:—
Chatter, clatter!—creaks and croaks
All the year the same old game!—
"See my spinning!" cries one dame,
"Five long ells of cloth, I trow!"
Cries another, "Mine must go,
Drat it, to the bleaching base!"

"Devil take the fowl!" says one:
"Mine are all bewitched, I guess;
Cocks and hens with vermin run,
Mangy, filthy, featherless."
Says another: "I confess
Every hair I drop, I keep—
Plague upon it, in a heap
Falling off to my disgrace!"

If you see a fellow walk
Up or down the street and back,
How you nod and wink and talk,
Hurry-skurry, cluck and clack!—
"What, I wonder, does he lack
Here about?"—"There's something wrong!"
Till the poor man's made a song
For the female populace.

It were well you gave no thought
To such idle company;
Shun these gossips, care for nought
But the business that you ply.
You who chatter, you who cry,
Heed my words; be wise, I pray:
Fewer, shorter stories say:
Bide at home, and mind your place.

Since you beg with such a grace,
How can I refuse a song,
Wholesome, honest, void of wrong,
On the follies of the place?

Another ballata, supposed to have been sung by a woman, is also ascribed to Lorenzo:

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me?

Dances and songs and merry wakes I leave
To lovers fair, more fortunate and gay;
Since to my heart so many sorrows cleave
That only doleful tears are mine for aye:
Who hath heart's ease, may carol, dance, and play
While I am fain to weep continually.

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me?

I too had heart's ease once, for so Love willed,
When my lord loved me with love strong and great:
But envious fortune my life's music stilled,
And turned to sadness all my gleeful state.
Ah me! Death surely were less desolate
Than thus to live and love-neglected be!

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me?

One only comfort soothes my heart's despair,
And mid this sorrow lends my soul some cheer;
Unto my lord I ever yielded fair
Service of faith untainted pure and clear;
If then I die thus guiltless, on my bier
It may be he will shed one tear for me.

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me?

IV. Poliziano. Angelo Ambrogini, the son of Benedetto, a doctor of law, was born at Montepulciano in Tuscany, and is known to history best as Poliziano, or in its English form, Politian, from the Latin name of his birthplace. He was the most brilliant classical scholar of his age and a philologist who found in the vernacular a perfect instrument of culture, without abandoning or slighting the classics. In both Latin and Italian his poetry is characterized by a charming diction and an inimitable style. Politian entered into clerical orders and was made canon of the Cathedral of Florence; was entrusted by Lorenzo with the education of his children, the care of his library and collection of antiquities, and was always the welcome guest and companion of his friend and patron. Besides his beautiful minor lyrics, he wrote the *Giostra* (*The Joust*), a poem on the tournament given by Lorenzo's brother Julian in 1475, but this remained unfinished because of the untimely murder of its hero. It is regarded as an extremely beautiful and memorable work. His lyric tragedy, or opera,

Orfeo, we will consider more at length in a succeeding section.

1. *Politian's Minor Lyrics.* The following is Miss Clerke's version of Politian's lyric on the perpetual spring, which Homer, Lucretius, Ariosto, Tasso, and Tennyson as well, have seen in visions:

A fair hill doth the Cyprian breezes woo,
And sevenfold stream of mighty Nilus see,
When the horizon reddeneth anew;
But mortal foot may not there planted be.
A green knoll on its slope doth rise to view,
A sunny meadow sheltering in its lee,
Where, wantoning 'mid flowers, each gale that passes
Sets lightly quivering the verdant grasses.

A wall of gold its furthest edge doth screen,
Where lies a vale with shady trees set fair,
Upon whose branches, 'mid leaves newly green,
The quiring birds chant love songs on the air.
The grateful sound of waters chimes between,
By twin streams cool and lucid shed forth there,
In the wave sweet and bitter of whose river
Love whets the golden arrows of his quiver.

Nor the perennial garden's foliage green
Doth snow new-fallen blanch, or rime-frost hoar.
No vernal blight dare come these walls between.
No gale the grass and shrubs e'er ruffles o'er.
Nor is the year in fourfold season seen;
But joyous Spring here reigns for evermore,
Shakes to the breeze her blonde and rippling tresses,
And weaves her wreath of flowers as on she presses.

It is curious that the great Politian, competent to fill his lecture rooms in Florence with students from all nations and to lecture to them

on the technicalities of grammar and rhetoric, should be by temperament a poet of the people and that he should have the power to lay aside at any moment his abstruse learning and improvise a ballata for girls to sing as they danced on summer evenings. The peculiarity of this lyric is that it starts with a couplet which serves as a refrain and supplies the rhyme to each successive stanza. The first is on the familiar subject, *Gather Ye Rose Buds While Ye May:*

I went a-roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

Violets and lilies grew on every side
  Mid the green grass, and young flowers wonderful,
Golden and white and red and azure-eyed;
  Toward which I stretched my hands, eager to pull
  Plenty to make my fair curls beautiful,
To crown my rippling curls with garlands gay.

I went a-roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

But when my lap was full of flowers I spied
  Roses at last, roses of every hue;
Therefore I ran to pluck their ruddy pride,
  Because their perfume was so sweet and true
  That all my soul went forth with pleasure new,
With yearning and desire too soft to say.

I went a-roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

I gazed and gazed. Hard task it were to tell
  How lovely were the roses in that hour:

One was but peeping from her verdant shell,
And some were faded, some were scarce in flower:
Then Love said: Go, pluck from the blooming bower
Those that thou seest ripe upon the spray.

I went a-roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

For when the full rose quits her tender sheath,
When she is sweetest and most fair to see,
Then is the time to place her in thy wreath,
Before her beauty and her freshness flee,
Gather ye therefore roses with great glee,
Sweet girls, or ere their perfume pass away.

I went a-roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

The following is a conventional song, in that it assumes a certain rusticity and represents an inhabitant of the city in love with a white-throated, golden-haired country girl, dressed in crimson silk:

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

I do not think the world a field could show
With herbs of perfume so surpassing rare;
But when I passed beyond the green hedge-row,
A thousand flowers around me flourished fair,
White, pied and crimson, in the summer air;
Among the which I heard a sweet bird's tone.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

Her song it was so tender and so clear
That all the world listened with love; then I

With stealthy feet a-tiptoe drawing near,
Her golden head and golden wings could spy,
Her plumes that flashed like rubies 'neath the sky,
Her crystal beak and throat and bosom's zone.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

Fain would I snare her, smit with mighty love;
But arrow-like she soared, and through the air
Fled to her nest upon the boughs above;
Wherefore to follow her is all my care,
For haply I might lure her by some snare
Forth from the woodland wild where she is flown.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

Yea, I might spread some net or woven wile;
But since of singing she doth take such pleasure,
Without or other art or other guile
I seek to win her with a tuneful measure;
Therefore in singing spend I all my leisure,
To make by singing this sweet bird my own.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

In the next, the same lady, who is supposed to have been Mona Ippolita Leoncina of Prato, is more directly celebrated under the name of Myrrha by Symonds, from whose translations we take those relating to Politian:

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes there flieth, girt with fire,
An angel of our lord, a laughing boy,

Who lights in frozen hearts a flaming pyre,
And with such sweetness doth the soul destroy,
That while it dies, it murmurs forth its joy:
Oh, blessed am I to dwell in Paradise!

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes a virtue still doth move,
So swift and with so fierce and strong a flight,
That it is like the lightning of high Jove,
Riving of iron and adamant the might;
Nathless the wound doth carry such delight
That he who suffers dwells in Paradise.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes a lovely messenger
Of joy so grave, so virtuous, doth flee,
That all proud souls are bound to bend to her;
So sweet her countenance, it turns the key
Of hard hearts locked in cold security:
Forth flies the prisoned soul to Paradise.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

In Myrrha's eyes beauty doth make her throne,
And sweetly smile and sweetly speak her mind:
Such grace in her fair eyes a man hath known
As in the whole wide world he scarce may find:
Yet if she slay him with a glance too kind,
He lives again beneath her gazing eyes.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

Maggio, describing the games, dances and jousting matches of the Florentine lads upon

the first morning in May, has been claimed for Lorenzo de' Medici, although better evidence attributes it to Politian, and it is said that the first two lines were taken from Guido Cavalcanti:

Welcome in the May
And the woodland garland gay!

Welcome in the jocund spring
Which bids all men lovers be!
Maidens, up with caroling,
With your sweethearts stout and free,
With roses and with blossoms ye
Who deck yourselves this first of May!

Up, and forth into the pure
Meadows, mid the trees and flowers!
Every beauty is secure
With so many bachelors:
Beasts and birds amid the bowers
Burn with love this first of May.

Maidens, who are young and fair,
Be not harsh, I counsel you;
For your youth cannot repair
Her prime of spring, as meadows do;
None be proud, but all be true
To men who love, this first of May.

Dance and carol every one
Of our band so bright and gay!
See your sweethearts how they run
Through the jousts for you to-day!
She who saith her lover nay,
Will deflower the sweets of May.

Lads in love take sword and shield
To make pretty girls their prize:

Yield ye, merry maidens, yield
To your lovers' vows and sighs:
Give his heart back ere it dies:
Wage not war this first of May.

He who steals another's heart,
Let him give his own heart too:
Who's the robber? 'Tis the smart
Little cherub Cupid, who
Homage comes to pay with you,
Damsels, to the first of May.

Love comes smiling; round his head
Lilies white and roses meet:
'Tis for you his flight is sped.
Fair one, haste our king to greet:
Who will fling him blossoms sweet
Soonest on this first of May?

Welcome, stranger! welcome, king!
Love, what hast thou to command?
That each girl with wreaths should ring
Her lover's hair with loving hand,
That girls small and great should band
In Love's ranks this first of May.

It would be interesting to quote at still greater length, but there is no limit to the poetry of the Italians, and we have read enough to have become reasonably familiar with its various forms and somewhat monotonous content. While there were other poets in the age of Lorenzo whose work is still considered excellent, we must content ourselves with a study of that which is really superior.

2. *The "Orfeo."* One of the most important poems of the fifteenth century is the *Orfeo,* which, though little more than an improvisa-

tion, yet stands as the earliest example of a secular drama, and its brief pages contain the germ of the opera, the tragedy and the pastoral play. Politian composed it at Mantua in the exceedingly-short space of two days, on the occasion of Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga's visit to the town of his nativity in 1472. It does not differ in form very much from the miracle plays of the earlier Renaissance, but in the introduction of madrigals, a carnival song and its remarkable choral passages we see the musical melodrama of later Italy. The facile graces of Politian's style, the "rosette fluency" for which the Italians have praise, are with difficulty reproduced in English, but Symonds in his translation has given us the main qualities of its style. There is not much of the dramatic quality which was so characteristic of the earliest English plays, but there is a certain fitness in the language given to the different speakers, and the lyrics are in close harmony with the character Orpheus sustains in mythology. The finest passage is the scene in Hades, but the weakening of the character of Orpheus toward the close is the chief blemish of the work. We omit the prelude, in which Mercury announces the play, and two of the Latin songs of Orpheus. The play begins with:

SCENE I

MOPSUS, *an old shepherd.*

Say, hast thou seen a calf of mine, all white
Save for a spot of black upon her front,
Two feet, one flank, and one knee ruddy-bright?

ARISTAEUS, *a young shepherd.*

Friend Mopsus, to the margin of this fount
No herds have come to drink since break of day;
Yet may'st thou hear them low on yonder mount.
Go, Thyrsis, search the upland lawn, I pray!
Thou Mopsus shalt with me the while abide;
For I would have thee listen to my lay.
[*Exit* THYRSIS.
'Twas yester morn where trees yon cavern hide,
I saw a nymph more fair than Dian, who
Had a young lusty lover at her side:
But when that more than woman met my view,
The heart within my bosom leapt outright,
And straight the madness of wild Love I knew.
Since then, dear Mopsus, I have no delight;
But weep and weep: of food and drink I tire,
And without slumber pass the weary night.

MOPSUS.

Friend Aristaeus, if this amorous fire
Thou dost not seek to quench as best may be,
Thy peace of soul will vanish in desire.
Thou know'st that love is no new thing to me:
I've proved how love grown old brings bitter pain:
Cure it at once, or hope no remedy;
For if thou find thee in Love's cruel chain,
Thy bees, thy blossoms will be out of mind,
Thy fields, thy vines, thy flocks, thy cotes, thy grain.

ARISTAEUS.

Mopsus, thou speakest to the deaf and blind:
Waste not on me these winged words, I pray,
Lest they be scattered to the inconstant wind.
I love, and cannot wish to say love nay;
Nor seek to cure so charming a disease:
They praise Love best who most against him say.
Yet if thou fain wouldst give my heart some ease,
Forth from thy wallet take thy pipe, and we
Will sing a while beneath the leafy trees;
For well my nymph is pleased with melody.

THE SONG.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

The lovely nymph is deaf to my lament,
Nor heeds the music of this rustic reed;
Wherefore my flocks and herds are ill content,
Nor bathe their hoof where grows the water weed,
Nor touch the tender herbage on the mead;
So sad, because their shepherd grieves, are they.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

The herds are sorry for their master's moan;
The nymph heeds not her lover though he die,
The lovely nymph, whose heart is made of stone—
Nay, steel, nay, adamant! She still doth fly
Far, far before me, when she sees me nigh,
Even as a lamb flies from the wolf away.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

Nay, tell her, pipe of mine, how swift doth flee
Beauty together with our years amain;
Tell her how time destroys all rarity,
Nor youth once lost can be renewed again;
Tell her to use the gifts that yet remain:
Roses and violets blossom not alway.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

Carry, ye winds, these sweet words to her ears,
Unto the ears of my loved nymph, and tell
How many tears I shed, what bitter tears!
Beg her to pity one who loves so well:
Say that my life is frail and mutable,
And melts like rime before the rising day.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

MOPSUS.

Less sweet, methinks the voice of waters falling
From cliffs that echo back their murmurous song;
Less sweet the summer sound of breezes calling
Through pine-tree tops sonorous all day long;
Than are thy rhymes, the soul of grief enthralling.
Thy rhymes o'er field and forest borne along:
If she but hear them, at thy feet she'll fawn.—
Lo, Thyrsis, hurrying homeward from the lawn!
[*Re-enters* THYRSIS.

ARISTAEUS.

What of the calf? Say, hast thou seen her now?

THYRSIS, *the cowherd.*

I have, and I'd as lief her throat were cut!
She almost ripped my bowels up, I vow,
Running amuck with horns well set to butt:
Nathless I've locked her in the stall below:
She's blown with grass, I tell you, saucy slut!

ARISTAEUS.

Now, prithee, let me hear what made you stay
So long upon the upland lawns away?

THYRSIS.

Walking, I spied a gentle maiden there,
Who plucked wild flowers upon the mountain side:
I scarcely think that Venus is more fair,
Of sweeter grace, most modest in her pride:
She speaks, she sings, with voice so soft and rare,
That listening streams would backward roll their tide;
Her face is snow and roses; gold her head;
All, all alone she goes, white-raimented.

ARISTAEUS.

Stay, Mopsus! I must follow: for 'tis she
Of whom I lately spoke. So, friend, farewell!

MOPSUS.

Hold, Aristaeus, lest for her or thee
Thy boldness be the cause of mischief fell!

ARISTAEUS.

Nay, death this day must be my destiny,
Unless I try my fate and break the spell.
Stay therefore, Mopsus, by the fountain stay!
I'll follow her, meanwhile, yon mountain way.
[*Exit* ARISTAEUS.

MOPSUS.

Thyrsis, what thinkest thou of thy loved lord?
See'st thou that all his senses are distraught?
Couldst thou not speak some seasonable word,
Tell him what shame this idle love hath wrought?

THYRSIS.

Free speech and servitude but ill accord,
Friend Mopsus, and the hind is folly-fraught
Who rates his lord! He's wiser far than I.
To tend these kine is all my mastery.

SCENE II

ARISTAEUS, *in pursuit of* EURYDICE.

Flee not from me, maiden!
Lo, I am thy friend!
Dearer far than life I hold thee.
List, thou beauty-laden,
To these prayers attend:
Flee not, let my arms enfold thee!
Neither wolf nor bear will grasp thee:
That I am thy friend I've told thee:
Stay thy course then; let me clasp thee!—

Since thou'rt deaf and wilt not heed me,
Since thou'rt still before me flying,
While I follow panting, dying,
Lend me wings, Love, wings to speed me!

[*Exit* ARISTAEUS, *pursuing* EURYDICE.

SCENE III

A DRYAD.

Sad news of lamentation and of pain,
Dear sisters, hath my voice to bear to you:
I scarcely dare to raise the dolorous strain.
Eurydice by yonder stream lies low;
The flowers are fading round her stricken head,
And the complaining waters weep their woe.
The stranger soul from that fair house hath fled:
And she, like privet pale, or white May-bloom
Untimely plucked, lies on the meadow, dead.
Hear then the cause of her disastrous doom!
A snake stole forth and stung her suddenly.
I am so burdened with this weight of gloom
That, lo, I bid you all come weep with me!

CHORUS OF DRYADS.

Let the wide air with our complaint resound!
For all heaven's light is spent.
Let rivers break their bound,
Swollen with tears outpoured from our lament!

Fell death hath ta'en their splendor from the skies:
The stars are sunk in gloom.
Stern death hath plucked the bloom
Of nymphs:—Eurydice down-trodden lies.
Weep, Love! The woodland cries.
Weep, groves and founts;
Ye craggy mounts; you leafy dell,
Beneath whose boughs she fell,
Bend every branch in time with this sad sound.

Let the wide air with our complaint resound!

Ah, fortune pitiless! Ah, cruel snake!
Ah, luckless doom of woes!
Like a cropped summer rose,
Or lily cut, she withers on the brake.
Her face, which once did make
Our age so bright
With beauty's light, is faint and pale;
And the clear lamp doth fail,
Which shed pure splendor all the world around.

Let the wide air with our complaint resound!

Who e'er will sing so sweetly, now she's gone?
Her gentle voice to hear,
The wild winds dared not stir;
And now they breathe but sorrow, moan for moan:
So many joys are flown,
Such jocund days
Doth Death erase with her sweet eyes!
Bid earth's lament arise,
And make our dirge through heaven and sea rebound!

Let the wide air with our complaint resound!

A DRYAD.

'Tis surely Orpheus, who hath reached the hill,
With harp in hand, glad-eyed and light of heart!
He thinks that his dear love is living still.
My news will stab him with a sudden smart:
An unforeseen and unexpected blow
Wounds worst and stings the bosom's tenderest part.
Death hath disjoined the truest love, I know,
That nature yet to this low world revealed,
And quenched the flame in its most charming glow.
Go, sisters, hasten ye to yonder field,
Where on the sward lies slain Eurydice;

Strew her with flowers and grasses! I must yield
This man the measure of his misery.

[*Exeunt* DRYADS. *Enter* ORPHEUS, *singing.*

. . . . . .

A DRYAD.

Orpheus, I bring thee bitter news. Alas!
Thy nymph who was so beautiful, is slain!
Flying from Aristaeus o'er the grass,
What time she reached yon stream that threads the plain,
A snake which lurked mid flowers where she did pass,
Pierced her fair foot with his envenomed bane:
So fierce, so potent was the sting, that she
Died in mid course. Ah, woe that this should be!

[ORPHEUS *turns to go in silence.*

MNESILLUS, *the satyr.*

Mark ye how sunk in woe
The poor wretch forth doth pass,
And may not answer, for his grief, one word?
On some lone shore, unheard,
Far, far away, he'll go,
And pour his heart forth to the winds, alas!
I'll follow and observe if he
Moves with his moan the hills to sympathy.

[*Follows* ORPHEUS.

ORPHEUS.

Let us lament, O lyre disconsolate!
Our wonted music is in tune no more.
Lament we while the heavens revolve, and let
The nightingale be conquered on Love's shore!
O heaven, O earth, O sea, O cruel fate!
How shall I bear a pang so passing sore?
Eurydice, my love! O life of mine!
On earth I will no more without thee pine!

I will go down unto the doors of Hell,
And see if mercy may be found below:
Perchance we shall reverse fate's spoken spell
With tearful songs and words of honeyed woe:
Perchance will Death be pitiful; for well
With singing have we turned the streams that flow;
Moved stones, together hind and tiger drawn,
And made trees dance upon the forest lawn.
[*Passes from sight on his way to Hades.*

MNESILLUS.

The staff of Fate is strong
And will not lightly bend,
Nor yet the stubborn gates of steely Hell.
Nay, I can see full well
His life will not be long:
Those downward feet no more will earthward wend.
What marvel if they lose the light,
Who make blind Love their guide by day and night!

SCENE IV

ORPHEUS, *at the gate of Hell.*

Pity, nay pity for a lover's moan!
Ye Powers of Hell, let pity reign in you!
To your dark regions led me Love alone:
Downward upon his wings of light I flew.
Hush, Cerberus! Howl not by Pluto's throne!
For when you hear my tale of misery, you,
Nor you alone, but all who here abide
In this blind world, will weep by Lethe's tide.
There is no need, ye Furies, thus to rage;
To dart those snakes that in your tresses twine:
Knew ye the cause of this my pilgrimage,
Ye would lie down and join your moans with mine.
Let this poor wretch but pass, who war doth wage
With heaven, the elements, the powers divine!
I beg for pity or for death. No more!
But open, ope Hell's adamantine door!
[ORPHEUS *enters Hell.*

PLUTO.

What man is he who with his golden lyre
Hath moved the gates that never move,
While the dead folk repeat his dirge of love?
The rolling stone no more doth tire
Swart Sisyphus on yonder hill;
And Tantalus with water slakes his fire:
The groans of mangled Tityos are still;
Ixion's wheel forgets to fly;
The Danaids their urns can fill:
I hear no more the tortured spirits cry;
But all find rest in that sweet harmony.

PROSERPINE.

Dear consort, since, compelled by love of thee,
I left the light of heaven serene,
And came to reign in hell, a somber queen;
The charm of tenderest sympathy
Hath never yet had power to turn
My stubborn heart, or draw forth tears from me.
Now with desire for yon sweet voice I yearn;
Nor is there aught so dear
As that delight. Nay, be not stern
To this one prayer! Relax thy brows severe,
And rest a while with me that song to hear!

[ORPHEUS *stands before the throne.*

ORPHEUS.

Ye rulers of the people lost in gloom,
Who see no more the jocund light of day!
Ye who inherit all things that the womb
Of Nature and the elements display!
Hear ye the grief that draws me to the tomb!
Love, cruel Love, hath led me on this way:
Not to chain Cerberus I hither come,
But to bring back my mistress to her home.
A serpent hidden among flowers and leaves
Stole my fair mistress—nay, my heart—from me:
Wherefore my wounded life for ever grieves,

Nor can I stand against this agony.
Still, if some fragrance lingers yet and cleaves
Of your famed love unto your memory,
If of that ancient rape you think at all,
Give back Eurydice!—On you I call.
All things ere long unto this bourne descend:
All mortal lives to you return at last:
Whate'er the moon hath circled, in the end
Must fade and perish in your empire vast:
Some sooner and some later hither wend;
Yet all upon this pathway shall have passed:
This of our footsteps is the final goal;
And then we dwell for aye in your control.
Therefore the nymph I love is left for you
When nature leads her deathward in due time:
But now you've cropped the tendrils as they grew,
The grapes unripe, while yet the sap did climb:
Who reaps the young blades wet with April dew,
Nor waits till summer hath o'erpassed her prime?
Give back, give back my hope one little day!—
Not for a gift, but for a loan I pray.
I pray not to you by the waves forlorn
Of marshy Styx or dismal Acheron,
By Chaos where the mighty world was born,
Or by the sounding flames of Phlegethon;
But by the fruit which charmed thee on that morn
When thou didst leave our world for this dread throne!
O queen! if thou reject this pleading breath,
I will no more return, but ask for death!

PROSERPINE.

Husband, I never guessed
That in our realm oppressed
Pity could find a home to dwell:
But now I know that mercy teems in Hell.
I see Death weep; her breast
Is shaken by those tears that faultless fell.
Let then thy laws severe for him be swayed

By love, by song, by the just prayers he prayed!

PLUTO.

She's thine, but at this price:
Bend not on her thine eyes,
Till mid the souls that live she stay.
See that thou turn not back upon the way!
Check all fond thoughts that rise!
Else will thy love be torn from thee away.
I am well pleased that song so rare as thine
The might of my dread scepter should incline.

. . . . . .

EURYDICE.

Ah, me! Thy love too great
Hath lost not thee alone!
I am torn from thee by strong Fate.
No more I am thine own.
In vain I stretch these arms. Back, back to Hell
I'm drawn, I'm drawn. My Orpheus, fare thee well!
[EURYDICE *disappears.*

ORPHEUS.

Who hath laid laws on Love?
Will pity not be given
For one short look so full thereof?
Since I am robbed of heaven,
Since all my joy so great is turned to pain,
I will go back and plead with Death again!
[TISIPHONE *blocks his way.*

TISIPHONE.

Nay, seek not back to turn!
Vain is thy weeping, all thy words are vain.
Eurydice may not complain
Of aught but thee—albeit her grief is great.
Vain are thy verses 'gainst the voice of Fate!
How vain thy song! For Death is stern!
Try not the backward path: thy feet refrain!
The laws of the abyss are fixed and firm remain.

SCENE VI

ORPHEUS.

What sorrow-laden song shall e'er be found
To match the burden of my matchless woe?
How shall I make the fount of tears abound,
To weep apace with grief's unmeasured flow?
Salt tears I'll waste upon the barren ground,
So long as life delays me here below;
And since my fate hath wrought me wrong so sore,
I swear I'll never love a woman more!
Henceforth I'll pluck the buds of opening spring,
The bloom of youth when life is loveliest,
Ere years have spoiled the beauty which they bring:
This love, I swear, is sweetest, softest, best!
Of female charms let no one speak or sing;
Since she is slain who ruled within my breast.
He who would seek my converse, let him see
That ne'er he talk of women's love to me!
How pitiful is he who changes mind
For woman! for her love laments or grieves!
Who suffers her in chains his will to bind,
Or trusts her words lighter than withered leaves,
Her loving looks more treacherous than the wind!
A thousand times she veers; to nothing cleaves:
Follows who flies; from him who follows, flees;
And comes and goes like waves on stormy seas!
High Jove confirms the truth of what I said,
Who, caught and bound in love's delightful snare,
Enjoys in heaven his own bright Ganymed:
Phoebus on earth had Hyacinth the fair:
Hercules, conqueror of the world, was led
Captive to Hylas by this love so rare.—
Advice for husbands! Seek divorce, and fly
Far, far away from female company!

[*Enter a* MAENAD *leading a train of* BACCHANTES.

A MAENAD.

Ho! Sisters! Up! Alive!
See him who doth our sex deride!

Hunt him to death, the slave!
Thou snatch the thyrsus! Thou this oak-tree rive!
Cast down this doeskin and that hide!
We'll wreak our fury on the knave!
Yea, he shall feel our wrath, the knave!
He shall yield up his hide
Riven as woodmen fir-trees rive!
No power his life can save;
Since women he hath dared deride!
Ho! To him, sisters! Ho! Alive!

[ORPHEUS *is chased off the scene and slain: the* MAENADS *then return.*

A MAENAD.

Ho! Bacchus! Ho! I yield thee thanks for this!
Through all the woodland we the wretch have borne:
So that each root is slaked with blood of his:
Yea, limb from limb his body have we torn
Through the wild forest with a fearful bliss:
His gore hath bathed the earth by ash and thorn!—
Go then! thy blame on lawful wedlock fling!
Ho! Bacchus! take the victim that we bring!

CHORUS OF MAENADS.

Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohe! Ohe!

With ivy coronals, bunch and berry,
Crown we our heads to worship thee!
Thou hast bidden us to make merry
Day and night with jollity!
Drink then! Bacchus is here! Drink free,
And hand ye the drinking-cup to me!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohe! Ohe!

See, I have emptied my horn already:
Stretch hither your beaker to me, I pray:
Are the hills and the lawns where we roam unsteady?
Or is it my brain that reels away?

Let every one run to and fro through the hay,
As ye see me run! Ho! after me!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohe! Ohe!

Methinks I am dropping in swoon or slumber:
Am I drunken or sober, yes or no?
What are these weights my feet encumber?
You too are tipsy, well I know!
Let every one do as ye see me do,
Let every one drink and quaff like me!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohe! Ohe!

Cry Bacchus! Cry Bacchus! Be blithe and merry,
Tossing wine down your throats away!
Let sleep then come and our gladness bury:
Drink you, and you, and you, while ye may!
Dancing is over for me to-day.
Let every one cry aloud Evohe!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohe! Ohe!

SICILIAN CART

CHAPTER XII

SECOND PERIOD (CONTINUED)
1476–1675
ITALIAN ART AND ARTISTS

ARCHITECTURE. The revival in the three arts, architecture, sculpture and painting, kept pace with that in literature. Because some of the artists were writers and later literature has been so full of allusions to their great masterpieces, a brief review of what was accomplished in Italy seems almost essential. The Italians never abandoned fully the rounded arches, and heavy domes which the Romans had built, and accordingly the return to classic forms was more natural than in other countries. Besides, there still remained to stimulate interest the beautiful

ruins of elegant buildings which the Romans had constructed on Greek models, and with the revival of interest in such things architects began to study the material that was at hand. The suggestiveness of this, added to the fact that decoration is not required until buildings have been produced to decorate, caused architecture to lead both painting and sculpture.

In 1403 Filippo Brunelleschi was inspired with the idea of studying these antique treasures, and by searching the relics of past ages he restored to use the three orders of architecture which had made the Greek temples so exquisitely beautiful, but which had been wholly lost to memory during the Dark Ages. His principal work was done at Florence, and his great triumph was the dome of the cathedral there, which was considered one of the greatest accomplishments of human ingenuity, much more grand and elegant than the dome of St. Peter's at Rome, which eclipses it only in height. He built also the Pitti Palace, which in originality and noble effects has never been excelled. Accordingly, to him we must give about the same position in architecture that Petrarch occupied in literature.

Donato Lazzari Bramante (1444–1514) was born at Urbino, and having showed at a very early age a remarkable genius for drawing, he was placed under celebrated masters; although he achieved success as an artist, he devoted himself more enthusiastically to architecture, traveled extensively to visit the art remains of

his country, and finally settled at Milan, where he remained for some years, only to go thence to Rome, where he was taken under the patronage of Popes Alexander VI and Julius II. Under the latter he tore down the old Church of St. Peter's, and began the present structure in 1513. He was obliged to work hurriedly and did not live to complete his task, which was passed over into the hands of Michelangelo, who changed many of his plans. Now the building has been so altered that nothing remains of Bramante's work excepting the pillars which support the dome.

The Renaissance in architecture had reached its height, for Bramante had perfected its principles, Alberti had written a great work on the subject, and everywhere in Italy magnificent buildings were in the process of construction, those devoted to civil and religious purposes being especially in harmony with classic designs. Michelangelo lived to see this art begin its decay, although, as chief architect of St. Peter's and designer of its majestic dome and of the grand staircase in the Palace of the Senators on the Capitoline Hill, he had showed his ability in building to be as great as in sculpture and painting. After him, however, the decay of classic architecture was rapid, for a slavish imitation of Roman models set in, and the strong love of such decorative effects as sculptured friezes, fancy woodwork and gay colors coarsened and debased the simplicity of Greek styles.

It will be seen, then, that the Renaissance in architecture did not contribute anything distinctively new, but the spirit of classic Greek art through Bramante's leading has left permanent records in the Louvre, the Tuileries, the Luxembourg and the Palace of Versailles in Paris; the Heidelburg Schloss in Germany, and St. Paul's Cathedral, White Hall, and Blenheim, in England; and even to-day our best architects study those imperishable forms.

II. SCULPTURE. The first manifestation in sculpture of a return to classic forms was shown in a softening of the conventional figures of the Middle Ages, a greater originality and a closer study of nature, until almost simultaneously there appeared three great sculptors, Ghiberti, Donatello and Luca della Robbia.

The first of the three in point of time was Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378–1445), the son of wealthy Florentine parents. The young Lorenzo lived for several years with his stepfather, a famous goldsmith, under whose instruction he learned the elements of the goldsmith's art and received an inspiration which showed wider fields for his genius in the art of the sculptor. Now his fame rests principally upon the "Paradise Portals," two wonderful bronze doors of the Baptistry in Florence. Upon these are represented in twenty-eight panels scenes in the life of Christ, the fathers of the Church, and the evangelists, and from Michelangelo's remark that these doors were

worthy to serve as the gates of Paradise they have taken the name we have quoted above.

Donato di Betto Bardi, better known by the name of Donatello (1386–1446), was the son of a wool merchant of Florence, who at the age of seventeen went to Rome with his friend Brunelleschi, where the two youths, while working at the trade of goldsmith, studied architecture, took part in the excavation and searches for lost treasures of art, and gained a rich store of ideas and a high inspiration. Donatello took to sculpture with a vigor and robustness that enabled him to produce some of the most celebrated statues in the world. His *Saint George,* now in Florence, is the embodiment of energy and medieval chivalry; the boy Jesus and the boy John were favorite subjects, while he delighted also in depicting in marble child nature of every sort.

Luca della Robbia (1399–1482) was also a Florentine, brought up as a goldsmith, a companion of Ghiberti, but, like Donatello, a much more ardent sculptor, whose best work, however, consisted of enameled figures, most of them in white on a blue ground and representing madonnas and children. Many of them survive especially in the form of medallions, of which a valuable collection is to be found now in the South Kensington Museum. However, he accomplished more ambitious things, as the bronze doors of the sacristy of the cathedral at Florence, which constitute his real masterpiece, will prove. In the same cathedral

From Painting by Torrini

MICHELANGELO

AT WORK ON HIS "MOSES."

are his famous bas-reliefs of the singing children and the dancing children, of which photographs and casts are now common in schools and museums.

III. MICHELANGELO. Michael Angelo Buonarroti was born at Caprese of a well-established ancient family in poor circumstances. During his early school days, although living among those who held art in contempt, he showed very marked talent, and was chosen by Ghirlandaio as one of the youths whom Lorenzo de' Medici allowed to work in his garden under Bertoldo. The faun's head which he executed here so delighted Lorenzo that he took the boy, who was then fifteen or sixteen years of age, into his establishment and treated him as a son. On the death of his patron, Michelangelo, warned, it is said, by premonition that the Medici were to lose their power, fled to Bologna, whence he returned to Florence and in 1496 went to Rome, which thereafter became the center of his labors.

Though sculpture was his favorite art and the one in which he most excelled, yet he is famous as architect, painter and poet, as well. Next to Dante, no figure in Italian history stands out more prominently than this greatest man of the Renaissance. Among his most remarkable sculptures are the *Moses,* a figure intended for a magnificent mausoleum that was to have been built for the Pope Julius II, and a *David,* together with his figures in the Medici Chapel.

The wonderful paintings with which Michelangelo decorated the vault in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican at Rome are sufficient to have immortalized any man if he accomplished nothing in the other arts, but the *Last Judgment* and the other marvelous frescoes were painted after he had achieved distinction in sculpture and architecture, as we have already seen. Without taking space to particularize upon his remarkable work, it is sufficient to say that his genius was so overwhelming and his popularity in Italy so great that for several generations artists contented themselves with imitating him to the sacrifice of their own originality, and accordingly, the arts lost much of the elegance, beauty and force which characterized the early Renaissance.

Michelangelo was of medium height, with broad shoulders, and carried thereon a large head with protruding temples. Naturally of a noble and generous character, he was, nevertheless, obstinate and dictatorial at times and so fiery in his nature that he was impelled to lead a lonely and rather unsocial life. He never married, but late in life formed a platonic friendship with Vittoria Colonna, Italy's greatest poetess, and indited to her some of his best sonnets. Vittoria Colonna, Countess of Pescara, was the daughter of Fabrizio Colonna, and in 1494, at the age of four, was betrothed to Francesco d' Avalos and brought up in the mansion of his aunt, where later Tasso and other intellectual men of his time

were constant guests. Highly intellectual, well educated and possessed of remarkable beauty, she became immensely popular in her youth and turned her attention to poetry at a very early age. Her husband, to whom she seems to have been ardently devoted, was absent from her most of the time with the fighting army, and from 1512 she led a lonely life, thinking much upon the absent one and constituting him the one subject of her verse during that period. The brilliant career of the Marquis, her husband, ended in disgrace in 1525, but Vittoria, ignorant of some of his faults and forgiving others, mourned him faithfully and never remarried.

When the friendship between her and Michelangelo began, he was perhaps over sixty and the lady nearing fifty years of age. She admired the great artist, and he was attracted by a noble nature, while these feelings were strengthened by a unity of religious sentiment and a common love for poetry. Among their letters which have been preserved we may quote one written by Michelangelo in the year 1545:

I desired, lady, before I accepted the things which your ladyship has often expressed the will to give me—I desired to produce something for you with my own hand, in order to be as little as possible unworthy of this kindness. I have now come to recognize that the grace of God is not to be bought, and that to keep it waiting is a grievous sin. Therefore I acknowledge my error, and willingly accept your favors. When I possess them, not indeed because I shall have them in my house, but for

that I myself shall dwell in them, the place will seem to encircle me with Paradise. For which felicity I shall remain ever more obliged to your ladyship than I am already, if that is possible.

The bearer of this letter will be Urbino, who lives in my service. Your ladyship may inform him when you would like me to come and see the head you promised to show me.

Enclosed in the letter was this sonnet:

Seeking at least to be not all unfit
For thy sublime and boundless courtesy,
My lowly thoughts at first were fain to try
What they could yield for grace so infinite.
But now I know my unassisted wit
Is all too weak to make me soar so high,
For pardon, lady, for this fault I cry,
And wiser still I grow, remembering it.
Yea, well I see what folly 'twere to think
That largess dropped from thee like dews from heaven
Could e'er be paid by work so frail as mine!
To nothingness my art and talent sink;
He fails who from his mortal stores hath given
A thousandfold to match one gift divine.

A letter which Vittoria Colonna sent to Michelangelo is thus translated by Symonds:

Magnificent Messer Michelangelo: I did not reply earlier to your letter, because it was, as one might say, an answer to my last; for I thought that if you and I were to go on writing without intermission according to my obligation and your courtesy, I should have to neglect the Chapel of S. Catherine here, and be absent at the appointed hours for company with my sisterhood, while you would have to leave the Chapel of S. Paul, and be absent from morning through the day from your sweet usual colloquy with painted forms, the which with their natural accents do not speak to you less clearly than the

living persons round me speak to me. Thus we should both of us fail in our duty, I to the brides, you to the vicar of Christ. For these reasons, inasmuch as I am well assured of our steadfast friendship and firm affection, bound by knots of Christian kindness, I do not think it necessary to obtain the proof of your good will in letters by writing on my side, but rather to await with well-prepared mind some substantial occasion for serving you. Meanwhile I address my prayers to that Lord of whom you spoke to me with so fervent and humble a heart, when I left Rome, that when I return thither I may find you with his image renewed and enlivened by true faith in your soul, in like measure as you have painted it with perfect art in my Samaritan. Believe me to remain always yours and your Urbino's.

The following sonnet is given in Wordsworth's translation, which is considered literally faithful both to the spirit and the expression of the original:

Yes! hope may with my strong desire keep pace,
And I be undeluded, unbetrayed;
For if of our affections none find grace
In sight of Heaven, then, wherefore hath God made
The world which we inhabit? Better plea
Love cannot have, than that in loving thee
Glory to that eternal peace is paid,
Who such divinity to thee imparts
As hallows and makes pure all gentle hearts.
His hope is treacherous only whose love dies
With beauty, which is varying every hour:
But, in chaste hearts, uninfluenced by the power
Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower,
That breathes on earth the air of Paradise.

Vittoria died in 1547, and Michelangelo grieved bitterly over her death. Longfellow puts into his mouth the following lines:

All my friends are dead;
And she is dead, the noblest of them all.
I saw her face, when the great Sculptor Death,
Whom men should call Divine, had at a blow
Stricken her into marble; and I kissed
Her cold white hand.

After her death Michelangelo composed the two sonnets following, which are among his best:

When my rude hammer to the stubborn stone
Gives human shape, now that, now this, at will,
Following his hand who wields and guides it still,
It moves upon another's feet alone;
But that which dwells in heaven, the world doth fill
With beauty by pure motions of its own;
And since tools fashion tools which else were none,
Its life makes all that lives with living skill.
Now, for that every stroke excels the more
The higher at the forge doth ascend,
Her soul that fashioned mine hath sought the skies;
Wherefore unfinished I must meet my end,
If God, the great Artificer, denies
That aid which was unique on earth before.

When she who was the source of all my sighs
Fled from the world, herself, my straining sight,
Nature, who gave us that unique delight,
Was sunk in shame, and we had weeping eyes.
Yet shall not vauntful Death enjoy the prize,
This sun of suns which then he veiled in night;
For Love hath triumphed, lifting up her light
On earth and 'mid the saints of Paradise.
What though remorseless and impiteous doom
Deemed that the music of her deeds would die,
And that her splendor would be sunk in gloom?
The poet's page exalts her to the sky
With Life more living in the lifeless tomb,
And Death translates her soul to reign on high.

HOUSE OF MICHELANGELO
FLORENCE

A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THE BETTER CLASS OF HOUSES IN THE PERIOD OF ITALIAN RENAISSANCE.

The poetry of Michelangelo is described by Symonds as ungrammatical, rude in versification and crabbed or obscure in thought; it is probable that this criticism of their roughness is just, but the first editor smoothed them down, and it was not until much later that the originals were found. In any case he had acquired the poetic form, and he revealed his tremendous force and the deep springs of his tenderness as he could do in none of his other arts, so that the poetry in which he indulged whenever slightly melancholy is regarded as a priceless reminiscence of the man. Besides Vittoria Colonna, his one great attachment seems to have been to his friend Tommaso de' Cavalieri, to whom the following sonnet was most probably dedicated:

By your eyes' aid a gentle light I see,
Which but for these mine own would never share;
By your anxiliar feet a load I bear
Which my lame limbs refuse to bear for me.
I, plumeless, yet upon your pinions flee;
When heaven I seek, your soul conducts me there;
Blushes or pallor at your will I wear;
Sun chills and winter warms at your decree.
The fashion of your will prescribeth mine;
My thought hath in your thinking taken birth;
My speech gives voice to your discourse unspoken.
A sunless moon that by herself would shine,
I were without you; only seen on earth
By light of sun that on her dark hath broken.

When asked by a priest why he never married, Michelangelo is said to have replied: "I have only too much of a wife in this art of

mine. She has always kept me struggling on. My children will be the works I leave behind me. Even though they are worth naught, yet I shall live a while in them. Woe to Lorenzo Ghiberti if he had not made the gates of S. Giovanni. His children and grandchildren have sold and squandered the substance that he left. The gates are still in their places."

IV. Cellini. One of the most extraordinary characters of this extraordinary age was Benvenuto Cellini, born in Florence in 1500. He achieved fame as a goldsmith, sculptor and designer, and was so successful as a writer that he has given us in his autobiography perhaps the most vivid picture of contemporary life ever written. He relates the story of his birth and christening with the same frankness and unconventionality in which he writes the remainder of the work. He is speaking of his parents:

They enjoyed their consecrated love for eighteen years; but had no children, which they ardently desired. At the expiration of the eighteenth year, however, Giovanni's wife miscarried of two male children, through the unskillfulness of her medical attendants. She became pregnant again, and gave birth to a girl, who was called Rosa, after my father's mother. Two years after, she was once more with child, and, as women in her condition are liable to certain longings, hers being exactly the same upon this occasion as before, it was generally thought that she would have another girl, and it had been already agreed to give her the name of Reparata, after my mother's mother. It happened that she was brought to bed precisely the night of All-Saints-day, in the year 1500, at half an hour past four. The midwife,

who was sensible that the family expected the birth of a female, as soon as she had washed the child and wrapped it up in fine swaddling-clothes, came softly up to my father, and said to him, "I here bring you a fine present which you little expected." My father, who was of a philosophical disposition, and happened to be then walking about, said, "What God gives me, I shall always receive thankfully;" but, taking off the clothes, he saw with his own eyes the unexpected boy. Clasping his hands together, he lifted up his eyes to Heaven, saying: "Lord, I thank thee from the bottom of my heart for this present, which is very dear and welcome to me." The standers-by asked him, joyfully, how he proposed to call the child: he made them no other answer than, "He is WELCOME." And this name of Welcome (BENVENUTO) he resolved to give me at the font; and so I was christened accordingly.

Before continuing our autobiographical discussion, however, let us see what the man actually accomplished. In the first place his father desired him to become a flutist, and the young man, although he abhorred the instrument, acquired great skill in its use and continued to play it at intervals through his early manhood; but he was an artist to his finger tips, and he found his real field of work in sculpture and designing, whether he used gold, silver or marble as a medium. His most celebrated piece is the famous bronze statue of Perseus with the head of Medusa, preserved in the Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence. This has been described as a work of such "appalling grandeur as to make it one of the most typical and unforgetable monuments of the Italian Renaissance." To this day survive also the

famous silver salt-cellar of Francis I, a medallion of his patron, Pope Clement VII, and some gold medals; but while he expected to gain immortality through his accomplishment during his best working years, it has been in reality the autobiography, which he did not began until he was fifty-eight, that has conferred upon him the crown of everlasting fame.

Mr. Symonds, who translated the book into English, wrote that "the Genius of the Renaissance, incarnate in a single personality, leans forward and speaks to us" from its pages. Therein the author tells, with a startling frankness that disarms the moralist, the whole story of his loves and intrigues, his passionate devotion to art, his shameless self-worship, his curious traffic with devils and portents, and his passionate temper which made him more than once a murderer, who in a modern court would have had little chance in pleading self-defense. With apparent unconsciousness that he is exhibiting his turbulent and impracticable character and convincing his readers of the impossibility of living with him, he tells of his meetings with princes and nobles, how he outraged their forbearance and revenged himself for their exhausted patience by malicious tales, which were equally unwarranted, whether truthful or calumnious. There are few, if any, more entertaining autobiographies in existence.

From it we learn that after living in Bologna he went to Rome, became court musician to

Pope Clement VII, and made silver vessels of every description. Finally, in 1527, he actually killed with his own hand the constable Bourbon, who was attacking Rome, defended the city with a skill and valor no one else could approach, and later mortally wounded the Prince of Orange. Still later, after he had been pardoned for slaying his brother's murderer, he killed by accident a rival goldsmith. Pope Paul III set him free from the charge and put him to work engraving dies for the mint. Falsely accused of embezzling some of the pontifical jewels, he was thrown into the dungeon of St. Angelo, from which he escaped to the house of Cardinal d' Este, whose intercession saved him from death, though he was returned to prison. After serving a part of his sentence there, he was liberated and later went to Paris. There, at the court of Francis I, he executed many of his famous designs, but became embroiled in court intrigues; in a lawsuit he made such a murderous attack on the plaintiff that he was compelled to leave the city, though it is probable that the enmity of the King's mistress, Madame d' Estampes, was more influential in making him forfeit the King's favor than any tempestuous acts of the artist. In Florence he worked under the patronage of Cosmo de' Medici, but seems not to have changed his character in the least, for affrays and quarrels of all sorts continued.

About the year 1560, although he already had two or more natural children, he married

a woman, regarding whose identity there is some uncertainty. He had five legitimate children, two of whom died in their infancy. On the fifteenth of February, 1570, he died, and on the register of the Academy of Drawing appears the following entry:

I record it, that on the present eighteenth of February, was buried Signor Benvenuto Cellini, the sculptor; and he was buried by his own direction in our chapter-house of the Nunziata, with a grand funeral pomp, at which were present our whole academy, together with the company. When we had repaired to his house, and were seated in proper order, after all the monks had passed by, the bier was lifted up by four of the academicians, and carried with the usual attendance to the Nunziata: the ceremonies of the church being there performed over it, it was taken by the same academicians, and conveyed to the chapter-house; the ceremonies of divine worship being repeated, a monk, who had been charged the evening before to compose the funeral sermon of Signor Benvenuto, in praise both of his life and works, and his excellent moral qualities, mounted the pulpit, and preached a funeral sermon, which was highly approved of by the whole academy and by the people, who struggled to get into the chapter, as well to see the body of Benvenuto, as to hear the commendation of his good qualities. The whole ceremony was performed with a great number of wax-lights, both in the church and the chapter-house thereunto belonging.

His acquaintance with the prominent men of his time was wide and intimate, and in his autobiography there are constant allusions to Michelangelo, Raphael and others, of whose fame he does not appear particularly jealous, but whose work he certainly considers not

superior to his own. While these allusions are numerous, they are not, however, especially illuminating, for the interesting old egotist almost invariably finds a suggestion of comparison and drifts from them into a discussion of his own merits and deeds. It is Benvenuto Cellini that interests him above all else.

V. EXTRACTS FROM CELLINI'S "MEMOIRS." Of his boyhood he writes as follows:

Having attained the age of fifteen, I engaged myself, against my father's inclination, with a goldsmith, named Antonio di Sandro, who was commonly called Marcone. This was an excellent artist, and a very worthy man, high-spirited, and generous in every respect. My father would not have him allow me any wages, as was customary with other workmen; for this reason, that, since I voluntarily applied myself to this art, I might likewise have an opportunity to draw whenever I thought proper. To this arrangement I readily acceded, and my worthy master was much pleased with the bargain. He had an only, but illegitimate son, to whom he often directed his orders, on purpose to spare me. So great was my inclination to improve, that in a few months I rivaled the most skillful journeyman in the business, and began to reap some fruits from my labor. I continued, however, to play, sometimes, through complaisance to my father, either upon the flute or the horn; and I constantly drew tears and deep sighs from him every time he heard me. From a feeling of filial piety, I often gave him that satisfaction, endeavoring to persuade him that it gave me also particular pleasure.

Cellini's departure for Rome at the age of twenty-three was occasioned by the following circumstances:

Having at this time worked with several masters in Florence, amongst the different goldsmiths I knew in that

city, I met with some persons of worth, as was Marcone, my first master; whilst others, who had the character of honest men, being envious of my works, and robbing and calumniating me, did me the greatest injustice. When I perceived this, I shook off my connexions with them, and looked upon them all as unprincipled men, and little better than thieves. A goldsmith, amongst the rest, named Giovanni Battista Sogliani, was so complaisant as to lend me part of his shop, which stood at the side of the new market, hard by Landi's bank. There I executed many little works, earned a great deal of money, and was enabled to assist my relations materially. Envy began then to rankle in the hearts of my former bad masters, whose names were Salvadore and Michele Guasconti; they all three kept shops, and had immense business. Seeing that they did me ill offices with some men of worth, I complained of it, and said they ought to be satisfied with having robbed me, as they had done, under the mask of benevolence. This coming to their ears, they declared loudly that they would make me repent having uttered such words; but I, being a stranger to fear, little regarded their menaces.

As I happened one day to lean against the shop of one of these men, he called me to him, and in the most abusive language bullied and threatened me. Upon which I said, that if they had done their duty with respect to me, I should have spoken of them as persons of fair character; but, as they had behaved in a different manner, they had only themselves to complain of. Whilst I spoke thus, one Gherardo Guasconti, a cousin of theirs, who was in all probability set on by them, took the opportunity, as a beast loaded with bricks happened to pass by, to push it so violently against me, that I was very much hurt. Upon which I instantly turned about, and seeing him laugh, gave him so violent a blow on the temple that he fell down, and lay upon the ground motionless and insensible. Then turning to his cousins, I said to them, "That is the way I use cowardly rascals like you;" and as they, confiding in their number, seemed preparing to take their

revenge, I, in a violent passion, drew a little knife, and vented my anger in these words,—"If any one of you offers to quit the shop, let another run for a confessor, as there will be no occasion for a surgeon." This declaration struck such terror into them all, that not one of them ventured to stir to the assistance of his cousin.

No sooner had I left the place, but both the fathers and sons ran to the magistrates, and told them that I had violently assaulted them with arms, in so audacious a manner, that the like had never been known in Florence. The Council of Eight summoned me, and I, without delay, presented myself before them. Here I met with a severe reprimand, as well in consequence of the appearance of my adversaries in long mantles and robes, whilst I wore only a cloak, as because they had taken care to prepossess them in their favor, a precaution which I, being inexperienced, and trusting to the goodness of my cause, had neglected. I told them, that as I had received such provocation from Gherardo, and had only given him a slap on the face, I did not think I deserved so severe a rebuke. Prinzivalle della Stufa, who was one of that court, hardly suffering me to make an end of the words "slap on the face," exclaimed, "You gave him a violent blow with your fist, and not a slap." The bell having rung, and we being all dismissed, Prinzivalle thus spoke in my favor to the rest of the bench: "Observe, gentlemen, the simplicity of this poor youth, who acknowledges himself to have given a slap on the face, thinking it to be a less offense than a violent blow; whereas there is a penalty of five-and-twenty crowns for giving a person a slap on the face, in the new-market; while the penalty for a blow with the fist is little or nothing. This is a very worthy young man, who supports his poor relations by his industry: would to God that there were many like him in our city, which can, indeed, boast but a very small number of virtuous citizens."

There were in the court some persons in folded caps, who, moved by the importunities and misrepresentations of my adversaries, because they were of the faction of Fra

Girolamo, were for having me sent to prison, and heavily fined: but the good Prinzivalle defeated their malice, by getting me fined only in four bushels of meal, which were to be given in charity to the monastery *delle Murate.* This same judge, having called me into his presence, commanded me not to say a single word, but obey the orders of the court, upon pain of incurring their displeasure. They sent us then to the chancellor, and I muttered the words "slap, and not a blow, on the face;" the magistrates burst out a laughing. The chancellor commanded us all to give security to each other for our good behavior, and sentenced me only to pay the four measures of meal. I thought myself very hardly used, and having sent for a cousin of mine, whose name was Annibale Librodoro, father to Signor Librodoro, the surgeon, that he might be bail for me, he refused to appear. This incensed me to the highest degree, believing my case desperate, and I exclaimed loudly at his behavior, as he was under great obligations to my family. Here it may be observed how a man's stars not only incline, but actually compel, him to do their behest.

Inflamed by this treatment, swelling like an enraged asp, and being naturally of a very passionate temper, I waited till the court broke up, and the magistrates were gone to dinner. Finding myself then alone, and that I was no longer observed by any of the officers of the court, I left the place in a violent fury, and went in all haste to my workshop, where I took up a dagger, and ran to attack my adversaries, who by that time were come home. I found them at table, and young Gherardo, who had been the chief cause of the quarrel, immediately flew at me. I thereupon gave him a stab in the breast, which pierced through his cloak and doublet, without once reaching his skin, or doing him any sort of harm. Imagining, however, from the rustling of his clothes, upon my giving the stab, and from his falling flat upon the ground, through fright and astonishment, that I had done him some great hurt, I cried out, "Traitor, this day I shall be revenged on you all." The father, mother, and sisters,

thinking that the day of judgment was come, fell prostrate upon their knees, and, with voices full of terror and consternation, implored for mercy. Seeing then that none of my adversaries stood upon the defensive, and that Gherardo lay stretched out upon the ground like a dead corpse, I scorned to meddle with them, but ran down stairs like a madman. When I got into the street, I found the rest of the family, who were about a dozen in number, ready to attack me. One of them held a ball of iron, another a thick iron tube, another a hammer taken from an anvil, and others again had cudgels in their hands. Rushing amongst them like a mad bull, I threw down four or five and fell to the ground along with them, now aiming my dagger at one, now at another. Those who continued standing exerted themselves to the utmost, belaboring me with their hammers and cudgels; but, as God sometimes mercifully interposes upon such occasions, it so happened that I neither received nor did any harm. I lost nothing but my cap, which fell into the hands of some of my adversaries who at first had fled: being assured it was only my cap, each of them struck it with his weapon; but, upon looking about for the wounded and slain, it appeared that none of them had sustained any injury.

The scuffle being over, I bent my course towards the convent of Santa Maria Novella, and accidentally met with a friar named Alessio Strozzi. Though I was not acquainted with the good father, I entreated him to save my life, saying, I had been guilty of a serious offense. The friar desired me not to be under any apprehensions, for that whatever crimes I might have committed I should be in perfect security in his cell. In about an hour's time, the magistrates having assembled in an extraordinary meeting, published one of the most tremendous edicts that ever was heard of, threatening the severest penalties to whosoever should grant me an asylum, or be privy to my concealment, without any distinction of place or quality of the person that harbored me.

My poor afflicted father, appearing before the eight

judges, fell prostrate upon the ground, and begged them to show compassion on his young and unfortunate son. Thereupon one of those incensed magistrates, shaking the top of his venerable hood, stood up, and thus angrily expressed himself: "Rise directly, and quit this spot, or, to-morrow morning, we shall send you from the town under a guard!" My father, in answer to these menaces, said, "You will do what God permits you, and nothing more." The magistrate replied that nothing could be more certain than that God had thus ordered matters. My father then said boldly to him, "My comfort is that you are a stranger to the decrees of Providence."

Having thus quitted the court, he came to me with a youth about my age, whose name was Piero, son of Giovanni Landi (we were dearer to each other than brothers); this young man had under his mantle an excellent sword and a coat of mail. My father having acquainted me with the situation of affairs, and what the magistrates had said, embraced me most tenderly, and gave me his blessing, saying. "May the protection of God be with you!" Then presenting me with the sword, and the coat of mail, he, with his own hands, helped to accouter me, concluding with these words, "My worthy son, with these arms you must either live or die." Piero Landi, who was present, wept without ceasing, and brought me ten crowns of gold. I desired him to pull off a few hairs from my cheeks, which were the first down that overspread them. Father Alessio dressed me in the habit of a friar, and gave me a lay brother for a companion.

I came out of the convent by the Al Prato gate, and walked by the side of the town walls, as far as the great square, ascending the steep of Montui, where I found, in one of the first houses, a person of the name of Grassuccio, natural brother to Benedetto da Monte Varchi. After I had laid aside my friar's disguise, and resumed my former appearance, we mounted two horses, which there stood ready for us, and galloped away in the night to Siena.

Another characteristic quarrel:

Amongst other beautiful ornaments, there was a handle to this silver vase of the most exquisite workmanship, which by means of a kind of spring stood exactly upon the mouth of it. The bishop one day ostentatiously exhibiting this piece of plate to some Spanish gentlemen of his acquaintance, it happened that one of them meddling indiscreetly with the handle, the delicate spring, ill-adapted to bear his rough touch, suddenly broke; and this occurred after his lordship had left the room. The gentleman thinking this a most unlucky accident, entreated the person who took care of the cupboard, to carry the vase directly to the artist who had made it, and order him to mend it without delay, promising that he should be paid his own price, in case he proved expeditious. The piece of plate being thus again come into my hands, I promised to mend it without loss of time; and this promise I performed, for it was brought me before dinner, and I finished it by ten o'clock at night. The person that left it with me then came in a most violent hurry, for my lord bishop had called for it again, to show it to other gentlemen. The messenger, not giving me time to utter a word, cried, "Quick, quick, bring the plate in all haste." Being determined to take my own time, and not to let him have it, I said I did not choose to make such despatch. The man then flew into a passion, and clapping his hand to his sword, seemed to be ready to break into the shop by main force; but this I prevented by dint of arms and menacing expressions. "I will not let you have it," said I; "go tell your master that it shall not be taken out of my shop, till I am paid for my trouble." Seeing he could not obtain it by bullying, he began to beg and pray in the most suppliant manner; saying, that if I would put it into his hands, he would take care to see me satisfied. These words did not in the least shake my resolution; and as I persisted in the same answer, he at last despaired of success, and swearing that he would return with a body of Spaniards and cut me to

pieces, thought proper to depart. In the meantime I, who gave some credit to what I had heard of Spanish assassinations, resolved that I would defend myself courageously; and having put in order an excellent fowling-piece, I said in my own mind, "He that takes both my property and my labor, may as well deprive me of life."

Whilst I thus argued with myself, a crowd of Spaniards made their appearance with the above-mentioned domestic at their head, who with great arrogance bade them break open the shop. At these words I showed them the muzzle of my loaded fusil, and cried out with a load voice, "Miscreants! traitors! cut-throats! are the houses and shops of citizens of Rome to be assaulted in this manner? If any thief amongst you offers to approach this door, I will shoot him dead." Then taking aim at the domestic, and pretending that I was going to fire at him, I cried out, "As for you, you rascal, that set them on, you are the very first I shall make an example of." Upon hearing this, he clapped spurs to a jennet, upon which he was mounted, and fled at full speed. The disturbance had now brought all the neighbors out of their houses, when some Roman gentlemen passing by said: "Kill the dogs, and we will stand by you." These words had such an effect on the Spaniards, that they left me in a terrible panic, and told his lordship all that had happened.

The bishop, a proud haughty man, reprimanded and scolded his servants very severely, both because they had commenced such an act of violence, and because they had not gone through with it. The painter who had been present at the above-mentioned accident, entering at this juncture, his lordship desired him to go and tell me, that if I did not bring him the piece of plate directly, he would leave no part of my body entire but my ears, but that if I brought it without delay, he would instantly satisfy my demand. The proud prelate's menaces did not in the least terrify me, and I sent him word I should immediately lay the whole affair before the Pope.

In the meantime his anger and my fear having subsided, and some gentlemen of Rome assuring me that I should come to no harm, and should be paid for my trouble, I repaired armed with my dagger and coat of mail, to the house of the bishop, who had caused all his servants to be drawn up in a line. There I made my appearance, Paulino following close behind me with the piece of plate. To make my way through the line of domestics, was like passing through the zodiac; one of them looked like a lion, another like a scorpion, and a third like a crab, till at last we came into the presence of this reverend prelate, who uttered the most priest-like, Spaniard-like words that I ever heard. All this time I never once looked at him, or so much as answered a single word; at which his lordship seemed to discover more resentment than ever, and having ordered pen, ink, and paper, desired me to write him a receipt. I then looked him full in the face, and told him that I would readily do so, after I had received my money. The haughty bishop was then more exasperated then ever; but in fine, after a great deal of scolding and hectoring, I was paid, and afterwards, having written an acquittance, left the place in high spirits.

Pope Clement afterwards heard the whole affair, having first seen the piece of plate in question, though it was not shown him by me. He was highly pleased at what had happened, and said publicly that he entirely approved of my behavior, so that the bishop heartily repented what he had done; and, in order to make atonement for the past, sent me word by the same painter, that he intended to employ me in many commissions of importance; to which I made answer, that I was very willing to undertake them, but that I should insist upon being paid beforehand. These words coming likewise to the ear of Pope Clement made him laugh heartily. Cardinal Cibo was at Rome when the affair happened; and his Holiness told him the whole story of the difference between me and the bishop of Salamanca, with all the disturbances it had given rise to; upon which he turned to one of his do-

mestics, and bade him find constant employment for me in my business as a goldsmith.

One of his pranks among the dissipated friends with whom he sometimes consorted was the following:

After we had been several times in company together, our worthy president thought proper to invite us to sup at his house one Sunday, directing that every man should bring his *chere amie* (whom he called *crow*) with him, and he who brought no lady should be obliged to treat the company with a supper. Such members of the society as had no acquaintance amongst the courtesans, were obliged to procure ladies with great trouble and expense, for fear of exposing themselves at this agreeable entertainment. I had thought myself vastly well provided in a fine girl of the name of Pantasilea, who had a fondness for me; but I was obliged to resign her to one of my most intimate friends, named Bachiacca, who had been, and still continued, deeply in love with her. The girl, upon this occasion, was somewhat piqued, perceiving that I gave her up to Bachiacca, at the first word; a circumstance which induced her to imagine that I slighted her, and made a bad return for the affection she bore me. Her resentment afterwards involved me in a perplexing affair, of which I shall speak more at large in its proper place.

As the time drew near that we were to repair to the assembly above mentioned, and I happened to be without a female companion, I thought myself guilty of a great oversight in not having provided one; but not choosing to be disgraced by bringing any low, despicable creature amongst so many brilliant beauties, I thought of a frolic to increase the mirth of the company. Having formed my plan, I sent for a boy, of about sixteen, named Diego, who lived next door to me, and was son to a Spanish coppersmith. This lad was learning Latin at the grammar-school, to which he applied with great diligence: he

had a very genteel person, with a fine complexion: the contours of his face surpassed those of the ancient statue of Antinous, and I had often drawn his likeness, by which I acquired great reputation in my performances. The boy had no acquaintance in town, nor was he known to any of the society; he neglected his dress very much, his attention being entirely engrossed by study. Having sent for him to my house, I begged that he would dress himself in female attire, which I had provided. He was easily prevailed on to comply, and I, by means of a variety of ornaments, added a considerable luster to the beauty of his countenance. I put two rings in his ears, in which were two beautiful pearls; the rings being divided in the middle fastened upon his ears, which appeared to be bored: I then dressed his neck with gold necklaces and costly jewels. In the same manner I adorned his fingers with rings, and taking him gently by the ear, placed him before a looking glass. The boy, seeing himself in the glass, exclaimed with an exulting tone, "Heavens! Is that Diego?"

"Yes," I replied, "that is Diego, of whom I never before asked any favor, but now, for the first time, I will ask him to oblige me in one harmless request; and that is, to go with me in his present dress to the agreeable society which I have mentioned so often."

The lad, who was virtuous and discreet, modestly cast his eyes upon the ground, and deliberated for a few moments, then suddenly looking up, made answer, "I will go with you, Benvenuto; let us set out directly."

I put on his head a large handkerchief, which is called at Rome a summer-cloth. When we came to the place, the whole company were already met, and all rose to salute me: Michelagnolo was between Giulio Romano and Giovanni Francesco. As soon as I had taken the handkerchief from the head of my beautiful companion, Michelagnolo, who, as I have already observed, was one of the most facetious and diverting men in the world, with one hand taking hold of Giulio, and with the other of Giovanni Francesco, with his utmost might drew them

towards Diego, and obliged them to kneel down; at the same time falling upon his knees himself, and calling to the company he exclaimed aloud, "See in what form angels descend from the clouds! Though celestial beings are represented as males, behold there are female spirits in heaven likewise! O beautiful angel! O angel worthy of all praise, vouchsafe to save—vouchsafe to direct me!" At these words the facetious creature lifted up his right hand, and gave him a papal benediction. Michelagnolo rising, said, that it was customary to kiss the Pope's feet, but that angels were to be kissed on the cheeks; he then gave him a salute, at which the youth colored deeply, which greatly added to his beauty.

This scene being over, every man produced a sonnet, upon some subject or other; and we gave them to Michelagnolo for his perusal. The latter read them aloud, in a manner which infinitely increased the effect of their excellence. The company fell into discourse, and many fine things were said, which I shall not here particularize, except one expression which I recollect to have heard from that famous painter Giulio. This great man having looked upon all present with affection, but more attentively upon the ladies, turned about to Michelagnolo, and spoke to him thus: "My dear Michelagnolo, the name of *crow,* which you have given to our ladies, suits them pretty well, though they even seem a little inferior in beauty to crows, when compared to one of the finest peacocks that ever was beheld."

Dinner was now ready to serve up, when Giulio begged to be the person that should place us in proper order. His request being granted, he took the ladies by the hand, and made them sit at the upper end of the table, with mine in the midst of them; the men he placed next, and me in the middle, telling me that I was deserving of all manner of honor and distinction. Behind us there were rows of flower-pots, with beautiful jessamines, which seemed to heighten the charms of the young ladies, and especially of my Diego, beyond expression. Thus we all began to regale ourselves, with great cheerfulness, at that elegant

supper. After our repast was over, we were entertained with a concert of music, both vocal and instrumental; and as the performers sang and played with books before them, my angelical companion desired that he might be allowed to sing his part. He acquitted himself better than any of the rest, and Giulio and Michelagnolo, instead of expressing themselves in the same facetious terms they had done before, seemed to be struck with astonishment, and grew wild and extravagant in their praises. The music being over, one Aurelio Ascolano, a most wonderful *improvisatore*, sang some admirable verses in praise of the ladies. Whilst this person was singing, the two girls who had my beauty between them, never ceased prating and chattering; one of them explained in what manner she had fallen into that sort of life; another asked my companion how it came to be her fate, who were her friends, and how long she had been at Rome, with several other questions of the same kind. Were I to dwell upon trifles of such a nature, I might relate many odd things that were said and done there, occasioned by Pantasilea, who was passionately fond of me; but as that would be foreign to my design, I shall be content with briefly touching upon them.

The discourse of the two courtesans began at last to displease my counterfeit lady, who had taken the name of Pomona. As she was desirous to disengage herself from them, and get rid of their loose conversation, she sometimes turned to one side, sometimes to the other: the lady that Giulio brought with him, asked whether she was not ill; the counterfeit Pomona answered in the affirmative. Upon which the two ladies who had her between them, taking compassion of Pomona, begged her to retire; which in spite of Diego's reluctance, led to a discovery. The exasperated females loaded him with abusive language. An outcry being instantly set up, accompanied with great laughter and expressions of surprise, the grave Michelagnolo desired permission of all present to inflict upon me a penance at his own discretion. The company giving their assent to this with loud acclamations, he put me out

of pain by thrice repeating "Long live Signor Benvenuto!" This, he said, was the punishment I deserved for so humorous a frolic. Thus ended this pleasant entertainment, together with the day: and the company separating, retired to their respective habitations.

Of Michelangelo's interest on one occasion he writes:

About this time arrived at Florence a native of Siena, a man of lively genius, whose name was Girolamo Mazetti, and who had resided a long time in Turkey: he came to my shop, and employed me to make him a golden medal, to be worn upon a hat. He desired me to represent upon the medal the figure of Hercules tearing asunder the jaws of the lion. I instantly set about the work, and, whilst I was employed upon it, Michel Angelo Buonarroti came to see it. I had taken immense pains with this piece: the attitude and strength of the animal were better represented than in any previous performance of the kind. My manner of working was likewise entirely new to the divine Michel Angelo, so that he praised me to such a degree, that I conceived the strongest inclination imaginable to perform something extraordinary. But as I had no other employ than setting jewels, though I could not earn more money in any other branch, I was not yet satisfied, but wished to be concerned in business of more consequence.

It happened about this time that one Federigo Ginori, a young man of sublime genius (who had resided several years at Naples, and having a very advantageous person, had an intrigue with a princess in that city), conceived a fancy to make a medal representing Atlas, with a world upon his shoulders: he therefore requested the divine Michel Angelo to draw him a design. The latter said to him, "Go to a young jeweler, whose name is Benvenuto: he will serve you as well as you could wish: but that you may not think I shun so slight a trouble, I will, with all the pleasure imaginable, sketch you out a design; but at

the same time speak to Benvenuto to draw you another, and take the best of the two for your model."

Federigo Ginori came to me accordingly, and told me what he wanted, letting me know withal how highly the divine Michel Angelo had commended me; and that it was at his recommendation he had recourse to my assistance, that that great man had promised him a design, and that I was also to make a little waxen model. I accordingly set about it with the utmost ardor of application. When I had finished it, a painter, who was an intimate friend of Michel Angelo, and whose name was Giuliani Bugiardini brought me his design of the Atlas. At the same time I showed this Giuliani my little model of wax, which was very different from the drawing made by Michel Angelo, but Federigo and Bugiardini determined that I should follow my own model. I then began my work, and the divine Michel Angelo bestowed the highest praises imaginable, both on me and my performance. This work was a figure engraved on a thin plate, supporting on its shoulders the heavens, represented by a ball of crystal, on which was cut the zodiac, with a field of lapis lazuli. The effect was excessively fine. Under it was this motto, *Summam tulisse juvat.*

The setting of a diamond for the Pope:

Whilst they were bringing the money, he examined more minutely the ingenious artifice by which I had placed that fine diamond, and God the Father, in a proper position. I had laid the diamond exactly in the middle of the work, and over it I had represented God the Father sitting in a sort of a free, easy attitude, which suited admirably well with the rest of the piece, and did not in the least crowd the diamond; his right hand was lifted up, giving his blessing. Under the diamond I had drawn three little boys, who supported it with their arms raised aloft. One of these boys, which stood in the middle, was in full, the other two in half, rilievo. Round it were several figures of boys placed amongst other glittering jewels. The remainder of God the Father was covered

with a mantle, which waved in the wind, from whence issued several figures of boys, with other striking ornaments, most beautiful to behold. This work was made of a white stucco upon a black stone. When the officer brought the money, the Pope gave it to me with his own hand, and in the most obliging manner requested me to endeavor to please him by my execution, promising me that I should find my account in it.

The death of Cellini's brother and the revenge the former took form the basis of an exciting narrative:

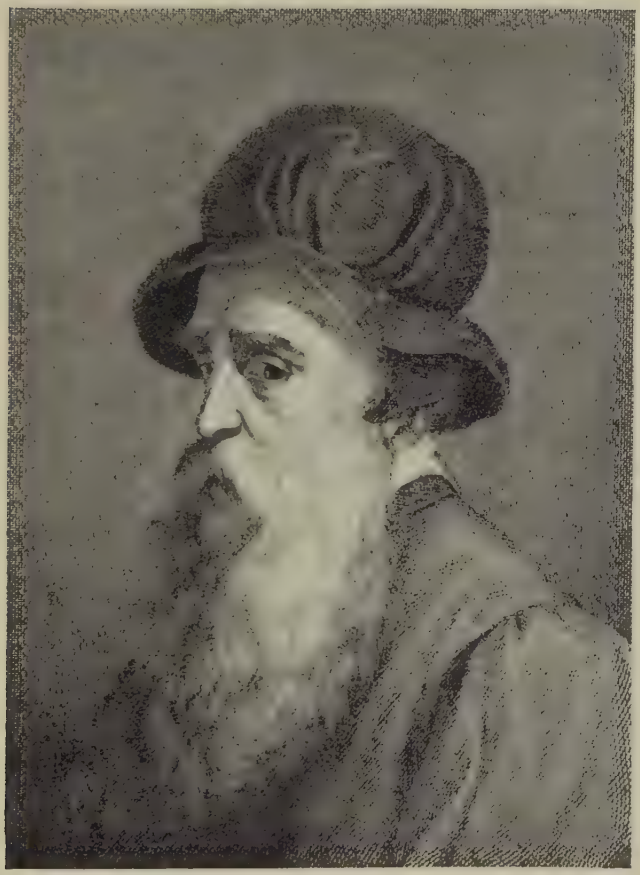
A brother of mine was at this time in Rome, in the service of Duke Alessandro, for whom the Pope had procured the duchy of Penna; in the same service were also a considerable number of gallant men, trained in the school of that great prince Giovannino de' Medici; and my brother was esteemed by the Duke, as one of the bravest of the whole corps. Happening one day, after dinner, to be in the part of the town called Banchi, at the shop of Baccino della Croce, to which all those brave fellows resorted, he had laid himself down upon a bench, and was overcome with sleep. At this time there passed by a company of city-guards, having in their custody one Captain Cisti, a Lombard, who had been bred likewise in the school of the same great Signor Giovannino, but was not then in the service of the Duke. Captain Cattivanza degli Strozzi, happening to be in the shop of Baccino della Croce, Captain Cisti saw him, and immediately cried out, "I was bringing you that large sum of money which I owed you: if you want it, come for it, before they carry me to gaol." This Cattivanza was very ready to put the courage of others to the proof, but did not care to run any risk himself; and as some gallant youths were present, who were willing to undertake this hazardous enterprise, though scarce strong enough for it, he desired them to advance towards Captain Cisti, in order to get the money from him, and, in case the guards made any

resistance, to overpower them if necessary. These young men were only four in number, all of them beardless: the first was Bertino Aldobrandi, the second Anguillotto da Lucca, I cannot recollect the names of the rest. Bertino had been pupil to my brother, who was beyond measure attached to him. These four bold young men came up to the city-guards, who were above fifty in number, pikemen, musqueteers, and two-handed swordmen. After a few words they drew their swords, and the four youths pressed the guards so hard, that if Captain Cattivanza had only just shown himself a little, even without drawing his sword, they would inevitably have put their adversaries to flight; but as the latter made a stand for a while, Bertino received some dangerous wounds, which brought him to the ground. Anguillotto too, at the same time, was wounded in his right arm, and being so far disabled that he could not hold his sword, he retreated in the best way he could; whereupon the others followed his example. Bertino was taken up in a dangerous condition.

During this transaction we were all at table, having dined about an hour later than usual; upon hearing of the disturbance, the eldest of the young men rose from table, to go and see the scuffle: his name was Giovanni. I said to him, "For God's sake, do not stir from hence, for in such affairs as this the loss is always certain, and there is nothing to be gained." His father spoke to him to the same effect, begging he would not leave the room. The youth without minding a word that was said to him, instantly ran down stairs. Being come to the place where the grand confusion was, and seeing Bertino raised from the ground, he began to turn back, when he met with my brother Cecchino, who asked him the cause of this quarrel. Giovanni, though warned by some persons not to tell the affair to Cecchino, cried out foolishly and indiscreetly, that Bertino Aldobrandi had been murdered by the city-guards. At this my brother set up a loud howl, which might be heard ten miles off, and said to Giovanni, "Alas! unhappy wretch that I am: can you

tell me which of them it was that killed him?'' Giovanni made answer that it was one who wore a large two-handed sword, with a blue feather in his hat. My poor brother having followed the guards, and knowing the person by the mark he had been told of, fell upon the murderer with great agility and bravery, and in spite of all resistance ran his sword through his body, pushing him with the hilt of it to the ground. He then assailed the rest with such intrepidity, that he alone and unassisted would have put all the guards to flight; but unluckily turning about to attack a musqueteer, the latter finding himself obliged to fire in his own defense, hit the valiant but unfortunate youth, just above the right knee, which brought him to the ground; whereupon the guards made haste to retreat, lest some other formidable champion should fly to his assistance.

Finding the tumult continue, I likewise rose from table, and putting on my sword, as swords were then worn by everybody, I repaired to the bridge of St. Angelo, where I saw a great concourse of people. I advanced up to the crowd, and as I was known to some of them, room was made for me, when they showed me what I by no means was pleased to see, though I had discovered a great curiosity to inquire into the matter. At my first coming up, I did not know my brother, for he was dressed in different clothes from those I had seen him in a short time before: but he knew me first, and said, ''Dear brother, do not be afflicted at my misfortune: it is what I, from my condition of life, foresaw and expected: get me quickly removed from this place, for I have but few hours to live.'' After he had related to me the accident that had befallen him, with all the brevity that such cases require, I answered him, ''Brother, this is the greatest misfortune that could happen to me in this world; but have a good heart, for before you die you shall see me revenge your much-lamented fate.'' The city-guard was about fifty paces distant from us: Maffio their captain having caused part of them to return, in order to carry off the corporal, whom my brother had slain, I walked up to them with the



CELLINI
1500–1570

utmost speed, wrapped and muffled up in my cloak; and as I had forced my way through the crowd, and was come up to Maffio, I should certainly have put him to death; but when I had drawn my sword half out of the scabbard, there came behind me Berlinghieri, a gallant youth, and my particular friend; and with him four brave young men, who said to Maffio, "Fly instantly, for this man will kill you!" Maffio having asked them who I was, they answered, "He is the brother of him you see lying there." Not choosing to hear anything farther, he retired with the utmost precipitation to the tower of Nona: the others then said to me, "Benvenuto, the hindrance we have been to you, however disagreeable, was intended for a good end. Let us now go to the assistance of the dying man." So we turned back, and went to my brother, whom I ordered to be removed to a neighboring house.

A consultation of surgeons being immediately called in, they dressed his wound, but he would not hear of having his leg cut off, though it would have been the likeliest way to save his life. As soon as they had done, Duke Alessandro made his appearance, and spoke to my brother with great tenderness: the latter being still in his right mind, said to his excellency, "My dear lord, there is nothing I am grieved at, but that you are going to lose a servant, who may be surpassed by others in courage and abilities, but will never be equaled for his fidelity and attachment to your person." The Duke desired he would endeavor to live, declaring that he knew him to be in all respects a valiant and worthy man: he then turned about to his people, and bid them supply the youth with whatever he wanted. No sooner was the Duke departed, but the overflowing of blood, which could not be stanched, affected my brother's brain, insomuch that he became the next night delirious. The only sign of understanding he discovered was, that when they brought the sacrament to him, he said, "You would have done well to make me begin with confessing my sins: it does not become me to receive that divine sacrament with this crazy and disordered frame. Let it be sufficient that my eyes behold it

with a profound adoration; it will be received by my immortal soul, and that alone supplicates the Deity for mercy and pardon.'' When he made an end of these words, and the sacrament was carried away, his delirium returned again. His ravings consisted of the greatest abominations, the strangest frenzies, and the most horrid words that could possibly come from the mouth of man; and thus he continued during the whole night, and till next day. No sooner had the sun appeared on the horizon, than he turned to me and said, ''Brother, I do not choose to stay here any longer, for these people might make me commit some extravagant action, which would cause them to repent having any way molested me;'' then disengaging both his legs, which we had put into a box, he made an effort as if he was going to mount on horseback, and turning his face about to me, he said three times, ''Adieu, adieu, adieu!'' At the last word, his generous soul departed.—The hour for the funeral being come, which was about ten o'clock at night, I got him honorably interred in the church of the Florentines; and afterwards caused a fine marble monument to be erected over him, on which were represented certain trophies and standards. I must not omit that one of his friends having asked him, who it was that shot him, and whether he should know him again, he answered in the affirmative, and told him all the marks by which he might be distinguished; and though he took the utmost care to conceal this declaration from me, I overheard all that passed, and intend in a proper place to give the sequel of that adventure. . . .

The musqueteer that shot my brother had formerly been in the light cavalry, and afterwards entered as a musqueteer amongst the city-guards. What increased my vexation and resentment was, that he made his boasts in these terms: ''If I had not despatched that bold youth, he alone would quickly have made us fly, which would have been an eternal disgrace.'' Perceiving that my solicitude and anxious desire of revenge deprived me both of sleep and appetite, which threw me into a lingering disorder, and not regarding the baseness of the under-

taking. one evening I prepared to put an end to my inquietude. This musqueteer lived hard by a place called Torre Sanguigna, next door to a house occupied by a courtesan, whose name was Signora Antea, one of the richest and most admired, and who made the greatest figure of any of her profession in Rome. Just after sunset, about eight o'clock, as this musqueteer stood at his door with his sword in his hand, when he had done supper, I, with great address, came close to him with a long dagger, and gave him a violent back-handed stroke, which I had aimed at his neck. He instantly turned round, and the blow falling directly upon his left shoulder, broke the whole bone of it, upon which, he dropped his sword, quite overcome by the pain, and took to his heels. I pursued, and in four steps came up with him, when, raising the dagger over his head, which he lowered down, I hit him exactly upon the nape of the neck. The weapon penetrated so deep, that though I made a great effort to recover it again, I found it impossible; for at this same instant there issued out of Antea's house four soldiers with their swords drawn, so that I was obliged to draw mine also in my own defense.

Having left the dagger, I retired, and for fear of a discovery repaired to the palace of Duke Alessandro, which was between the Piazza Novona and the Rotonda.

His experience with the black art:

It happened, through a variety of odd accidents, that I made acquaintance with a Sicilian priest, who was a man of genius and well versed in the Latin and Greek authors. Happening one day to have some conversation with him upon the art of necromancy, I, who had a great desire to know something of the matter, told him, that I had all my life felt a curiosity to be acquainted with the mysteries of this art. The priest made answer that the man must be of a resolute and steady temper who enters upon that study. I replied that I had fortitude and resolution enough, if I could but find an opportunity. The priest subjoined, "If you think you have the heart

to venture, I will give you all the satisfaction you can desire.'' Thus we agreed to undertake this matter.

The priest one evening prepared to satisfy me, and desired me to look out for a companion or two. I invited one Vicenzio Romoli, who was my intimate acquaintance: he brought with him a native of Pistoia, who cultivated the black art himself. We repaired to the Colosseo, and the priest, according to the custom of necromancers, began to draw circles upon the ground with the most impressive ceremonies imaginable: he likewise brought thither assafoetida, several precious perfumes, and fire, with some compositions which diffused noisome odors. As soon as he was in readiness, he made an opening in the circle, and having taken us by the hand one by one, he placed us within it. Then having arranged the other parts and assumed his wand, he ordered the other necromancer, his partner, to throw the perfumes into the fire at a proper time, entrusting the care of the fire and the perfumes to the rest, and began his incantations. This ceremony lasted above an hour and a half when there appeared several legions of devils, insomuch that the amphitheater was quite filled with them.

I was busy about the perfumes, when the priest, perceiving there was a considerable number of infernal spirits, turned to me, and said, ''Benvenuto, ask them something.'' I answered, ''Let them bring me into the company of my Sicilian mistress, Angelica.'' That night we obtained no answer of any sort; but I had received great satisfaction in having my curiosity so far indulged. The necromancer told me it was requisite we should go a second time, assuring me that I should be satisfied in whatever I asked, but that I must bring with me a pure and immaculate boy.

I took with me a youth who was in my service, of about twelve years of age, together with the same Vincenzio Romoli, who had been my companion the first time, and one Agnolino Gaddi, an intimate acquaintance, whom I likewise prevailed on to assist at the ceremony. When we came to the place appointed, the priest having made his

preparations as before, with the same and even more striking ceremonies, placed us within the circle, which he had likewise drawn with a more wonderful art, and in a more solemn manner than at our former meeting. Thus having committed the care of the perfumes and the fire to my friend Vincenzio, who was assisted by Agnolino Gaddi, he put into my hand a pintaculo or magical chart, and bid me turn it towards the places that he should direct me; and under the pintaculo I held my boy. The necromancer having begun to make his tremendous invocations, called by their names a multitude of demons, who were the leaders of the several legions, and invoked them by the virtue and power of the eternal uncreated God, who lives for ever, in the Hebrew language, as likewise in Latin and Greek; insomuch, that the amphitheater was almost in an instant filled with demons a hundred times more numerous than at the former conjuration. Vincenzio Romoli was busied in making a fire with the assistance of Agnolino, and burning a great quantity of precious perfumes. I, by the direction of the necromancer, again desired to be in the company of my Angelica. The former thereupon turning to me said. "Know, they have declared that in the space of a month you shall be in her company."

He then requested me to stand resolutely by him, because the legions were now above a thousand more in number than he had designed, and besides, these were the most dangerous, so that after they had answered my question it behoved him to be civil to them, and dismiss them quietly. At the same time, the boy under the pintaculo was in a terrible fright, saying, that there were in that place a million of fierce men, who threatened to destroy us; and that moreover four armed giants of an enormous stature were endeavoring to break into our circle. During this time, whilst the necromancer, trembling with fear, endeavored by mild and gentle methods to dismiss them in the best way he could, Vincenzio Romoli, who quivered like an aspen leaf, took care of the perfumes. Though I was as much terrified as any of

them, I did my utmost to conceal the terror I felt, so that I greatly contributed to inspire the rest with resolution; but the truth is, I gave myself over for a dead man, seeing the horrid fright the necromancer was in. The boy placed his head between his knees, and said, "In this posture will I die; for we shall all surely perish." I told him that all those demons were under us, and what he saw was smoke and shadow; so bid him hold up his head and take courage. No sooner did he look up, but he cried out, "The whole amphitheater is burning, and the fire is just falling upon us;" so covering his eyes with his hands, he again exclaimed, that destruction was inevitable, and he desired to see no more. The necromancer entreated me to have a good heart, and take care to burn proper perfumes; upon which I turned to Romoli, and bid him burn all the most precious perfumes he had. At the same time I cast my eye upon Agnolino Gaddi, who was terrified to such a degree, that he could scarce distinguish objects, and seemed to be half dead. Seeing him in this condition, I said, "Agnolo, upon these occasions a man should not yield to fear, but should stir about and give his assistance; so come directly and put on some more of these perfumes." Poor Agnolo, upon attempting to move, was so violently terrified, that the effects of his fear overpowered all the perfumes we were burning. The boy hearing a crepitation, ventured once more to raise his head, when seeing me laugh, he began to take courage, and said, that the devils were flying away with a vengeance.

In this condition we stayed till the bell rang for morning prayer. The boy again told us that there remained but few devils, and these were at a great distance. When the magician had performed the rest of his ceremonies, he stripped off his gown, and took up a wallet full of books which he had brought with him. We all went out of the circle together, keeping as close to each other as we possibly could, especially the boy, who had placed himself in the middle, holding the necromancer by the coat and me by the cloak. As we were going to our houses, in the

quarter of Banchi, the boy told us that two of the demons whom we had seen at the amphitheater, went on before us leaping and skipping, sometimes running upon the roofs of the houses, and sometimes upon the ground.

He kills his enemy, Pompeo:

In the meantime, the Pope was taken ill, and his physicians being of opinion that he was in great danger, my adversary, who was still afraid of me, hired certain Neapolitan bravoes to treat me in the manner he was apprehensive I should treat him: so that I found it a very difficult matter to defend my life from his attacks. However I went on with my work, and having finished it, waited on the Pope, whom I found very ill in bed; he gave me nevertheless the kindest reception, and expressing a desire to see both the medals and the instruments with which I had stamped them, ordered his spectacles and a light to be brought, but could discern nothing of the workmanship. He therefore began to examine them by the touch, and having done so for a time, he fetched a deep sigh, and told some of his courtiers, that he was sorry for me, but if it pleased God to restore his health, he would settle matters to my satisfaction. Three days after, he died, and I had my labor for my pains. I took heart notwithstanding, and comforted myself with the reflection of having acquired by means of those medals so much reputation, that I might depend upon being employed by any future Pope, and perhaps with better success.

By such considerations did I prevent myself from being dejected; and totally forgetting the injuries I had received from Pompeo, I put on my sword and repaired to St. Peter's, where I kissed the feet of the deceased pontiff, and could not refrain from tears. I then returned to Banchi, to reflect undisturbed on the confusion that happens on such occasions. Whilst I was sitting here in the company of several of my friends, Pompeo happened to pass by in the midst of ten armed men, and when he came opposite to the place where I sat, stopped

a while as if he had an intention to begin a quarrel. The brave young men, my friends, were for having me draw directly, but I instantly reflected, that by complying with their desire, I could not avoid hurting innocent persons; therefore thought it most advisable to expose none but myself to danger. Pompeo having stopped before my door, whilst you might say a couple of *Ave Marias,* began to laugh in my face; and when he went off, his comrades fell a-laughing likewise, shook their heads, and made many gestures in derision and defiance of me. My companions were for interposing in the quarrel, but I told them in an angry mood, that I was man enough to manage all my feuds by myself; so that every one might mind his own business. Mortified at this answer, my friends went away muttering to themselves: amongst these was the dearest friend I had in the world, whose name was Albertaccio del Bene, brother to Alessandro, and Albizzo, who now resides in Lyons, and is exceeding wealthy. This Albertaccio del Bene was one of the most surprising young men I ever knew, as intrepid as Caesar, and one who loved me as he loved himself. He was well aware that my forbearance was not an effect of pusillanimity, but of the most daring bravery, which he knew to be one of my qualities. In answer therefore to what I said, he begged of me as a favor, that I would indulge him so far as to take him for my companion in whatever enterprise I might meditate. To this I replied, "My dearest friend, Albertaccio, a time will soon come when I shall need your assistance; but on the present occasion, if you love me, do not give yourself any concern about me; only mind your own affairs, and quit the place directly, as the rest have done, for we must not trifle away time."

These words were uttered in great haste: in the meantime my enemies of the Bianchi quarter had walked on slowly towards a place called Chiavica, and reached a crossway where several streets meet; but that in which stood the house of my adversary, Pompeo, led directly to the Campo di Fiore. Pompeo entered an apothecary's

shop at the corner of the Chiavica, about some business, and stayed there some time: I was told that he had boasted of having bullied me; but it turned out a fatal adventure to him. Just as I arrived at that quarter, he was coming out of the shop, and his bravoes having made an opening formed a circle round him. I thereupon clapped my hand to a sharp dagger, and having forced my way through the file of ruffians, laid hold of him by the throat so quickly, and with such presence of mind, that there was not one of his friends could defend him. I pulled him towards me, to give him a blow in front, but he turned his face about through excess of terror, so that I wounded him exactly under the ear; and upon repeating my blow, he fell down dead. It had never been my intention to kill him, but blows are not always under command.

Having withdrawn the dagger with my left hand, and drawn my sword with the right, in order to defend myself, when I found that all the heroes of his faction ran up to the dead body, and that none of them advanced towards me, or seemed at all disposed to encounter me, I retreated down the street Julia, revolving within myself whither I could make my escape. When I had walked about three hundred paces, Piloto, the goldsmith, my intimate friend, came up to me, and said, "Brother, since the mischief is done, we must think of preserving you from danger." I answered him, "Let us go to Albertaccio del Bene, whom I told a while ago that I should shortly have occasion for his assistance." As soon as we reached Albertaccio's dwelling-house, infinite caresses were lavished on me, and all the young persons of condition, of the different nations in the quarter of Bianchi, except those of Milan, made their appearance, offering to risk their lives in order to preserve mine. Signor Luigi Rucellai also sent to make me a tender of all the service in his power, as did likewise several of the nobility besides him, for they were glad that I had despatched Pompeo, from an opinion that he had insulted me past all enduring, and they expressed great surprise

that I had so long been patient under accumulated injuries.

He amuses himself with hunting, and describes his experience:

The day was then almost spent, and I had shot a considerable number of ducks and geese; so having, as it were, formed a resolution to shoot no more that day, we made all the haste we could to Rome, and I called my dog, to whom I had given the name of Baruccio. Not seeing him before me, I turned about, and saw the well-taught animal watching some geese that had taken up their quarters in a ditch. I thereupon dismounted, and having charged my piece, shot at them from a considerable distance, and brought down two with a single ball; for I never used a greater charge, and with this I seldom missed at the distance of two hundred cubits, which is more than can be accomplished by other modes of loading. Of these one was almost dead, and the other, though wounded, made an impotent attempt to fly: my dog pursued the last, and brought it to me. Seeing that the other was sinking in the ditch, I came up to it, trusting to my boots, which were tolerably high: however, upon pressing the ground with my foot, it sunk under me; and though I took the goose, the boot on my right leg was filled with water. I held my foot up in the air to let the water run out: and, having mounted, we returned to Rome with the utmost expedition: but as the weather was extremely cold, I felt my leg frozen to such a degree, that I said to Felice —"Something must be done for the relief of this leg, for the pain it gives me is insupportable." The good-natured Felice, without a moment's delay, alighted from his horse, and having collected some thistles and small sticks, was going to make a fire: in the meantime having put my hands upon the feathers of the breast of the goose, I felt them very warm; upon which I told Felice that he need not trouble himself to make a fire: and, filling my boot with the feathers, I felt a genial warmth which invigorated me with new life.

Having again mounted our horses, we rode full speed to Rome. It was just night-fall when we arrived at a small eminence; and happening to look towards Florence, we both exclaimed in the utmost astonishment—"Great God! what wonderful phenomenon is that which appears yonder over Florence!" In figure it resembled a beam of fire, which shone with an extraordinary luster. I said to Felice, "We shall certainly hear that some great event has occurred at Florence." By the time we arrived at Rome it was exceedingly dark; and when we were come near the Bianchi quarter, not far from our own house, I going at a brisk canter, there chanced to be a heap of rubbish and broken tiles in the middle of the street, which neither my horse nor I perceived. He ascended it with precipitation; and then descending, stumbled and fell with his head between his legs; but by God's providence I escaped unhurt. The neighbors came out of their houses with lights upon hearing the noise. I had then got up, and ran to my house quite overjoyed at having received no harm, when I had been so near breaking my neck. I found some of my friends at home, to whom during supper I gave an account of my achievements in fowling, and of the strange phenomenon we had seen. They inquired what, in God's name, could be the meaning of such an appearance: "Doubtless," answered I, "some revolution must have happened at Florence." Thus we supped together cheerfully, and late the day following news were received at Rome of the death of Duke Alessandro. Thereupon several of my acquaintance came to me and said, "Your conjecture was very right, that something extraordinary happened at Florence."

He models Cardinal Bembo's likeness:

Leaving Rome, I bent my course to Florence, from whence I traveled on to Bologna, Venice, and Padua. Upon my arrival at the last city, my friend, Albertaccio del Bene, took me to his own house from the inn where I had put up. The day following I went to pay my respects to Signor Pietro Bembo, who had not then been

made a cardinal. He gave me the kindest reception I had ever met with; and said to Albertaccio, "I am resolved that Benvenuto shall stay here with all his company, if there were a hundred in number; so make up your mind to stay here with him, for I will not restore him to you upon any account." I stayed accordingly to enjoy the conversation of that excellent person. He had caused an apartment to be prepared for me, which would have been too magnificent even for a cardinal, and insisted upon my sitting constantly next to him at table: he then intimated to me in the most modest terms he could think of, that it would be highly agreeable to him if I were to model his likeness. There was, luckily for me, nothing that I desired more; so, having put some pieces of the whitest alabaster into a little box, I began the work, working the first day two hours without ceasing. I made so fine a sketch of the head, that my illustrious friend was astonished at it; for though he was a person of immense literature, and had an uncommon genius for poetry, he had not the least knowledge of my business; for which reason he thought that I had finished the figure when I had hardly begun it; insomuch, that I could not make him sensible that it required a considerable time to bring it to perfection. At last I formed a resolution to take my own time about it, and finish it in the completest manner I could; but as he wore a short beard, according to the Venetian fashion, I found it a very difficult matter to make a head to please myself. I, however, finished it at last, and it appeared to me to be one of the most complete pieces I had ever produced. He seemed to be in the utmost astonishment; for he took it for granted, that as I had made it of wax in two hours, I could make it of steel in ten; but when he saw that it was not possible for me to do it in two hundred, and that I was upon the point of taking my leave of him, in order to set out for France, he was greatly concerned, and begged I would make him a reverse for his medal, and that the device should be the horse Pegasus, in the midst of a garland of myrtle. This I did in about three hours, and it was finished in an

admirable taste: he was highly pleased with it, and said, "Such a horse as this appears to be a work ten times more considerable than that little head, upon which you bestowed so much pains: I cannot possibly account for this." He then desired me to make it for him in steel, and said, "I hope you will oblige me; you can do it very soon if you will." I promised him that, though it did not suit me to make it there, I would do it for him without fail at the first place at which I should happen to fix my residence.

The ingratitude of Rosso:

After having rested myself a short time, I went in search of Rosso the painter, who was then in the service of King Francis. I took it for granted that this man was one of the best friends I had in the world, because I had in Rome behaved to him in as obliging a manner as it is possible for one person to behave to another; and as a concise account may be sufficient to convey an idea of my conduct to the reader, I will here lay the whole before him, that the sin of ingratitude may appear in its most odious and shocking colors.

When he was at Rome he endeavored to depreciate the works of Raffaello da Urbino, at which his scholars were provoked to such a degree that they were bent on killing him: this danger I preserved him from, watching over him day and night with the greatest fatigue imaginable. Upon another occasion he had spoken ill of Signor Antonio da San Gallo, an excellent architect; in consequence of which the latter soon had him turned out of an employment, which he had procured for him from Signor Agnolo da Cesi, and from that time forward became so much his enemy, that he would have starved, if I had not often lent him ten crowns for his support. As he had never discharged this trifling debt, I went to pay him a visit, being informed that he was in the King's service, and thought he would not only return me my money, but do all that lay in his power in recommending me to the service of the great monarch. But the fellow

no sooner saw me, than he appeared to be in a terrible confusion, and said, "My friend Benvenuto, you have put yourself to too great an expense to come so long a journey, especially at such a time as this, when the court is entirely taken up with the approaching war, and can give no attention to our trifling performances." I answered that I had brought with me money enough to bear my expenses back to Rome, in the same manner that I had traveled to Paris; adding, that he made me a very indifferent return for all I had suffered on his account, and that I began to believe what Signor Antonio da San Gallo had told me concerning him. Upon his turning what I said into a jest, I saw through his low malice, and showed him a bill of exchange for 500 crowns addressed to Ricardo del Bene. The wretch was greatly ashamed, and would have detained me in a manner by force, but I laughed at him, and went away in the company of a painter who happened to be then present.

His escape from prison:

The constable of the castle had annually a certain disorder, which totally deprived him of his senses, and when the fit came upon him, he was talkative to excess. Every year he had some different whim: one time he fancied himself metamorphosed into a pitcher of oil; another time he thought himself a frog, and began to leap as such; another time again he imagined he was dead, and it was found necessary to humor his conceit by making a show of burying him: thus had he every year some new frenzy. This year he fancied himself a bat, and when he went to take a walk, he sometimes made just such a noise as bats do: he likewise used gestures with his hands and his body, as if he were going to fly. His physicians, and his old servants, who knew his disorder, procured him all the pleasures and amusements they could think of; and as they found he delighted greatly in my conversation, they frequently came to me, to conduct me to his apartment, where the poor man often detained me three or four hours chatting with him. He sometimes kept me at his

table to dine or sup, and always made me sit opposite to him: on which occasion he never ceased to talk himself, or to encourage me to join in conversation. At these interviews I generally took care to eat heartily, but the poor constable neither ate nor slept, insomuch that I was tired and jaded by constant attendance. Upon examining his countenance, I could perceive that his eyes looked quite shockingly, and that he began to squint.

He asked me whether I had even had a fancy to fly: I answered that I had always been very ready to attempt such things as men found most difficult; and that with regard to flying, as God had given me a body admirably well calculated for running, I had even resolution enough to attempt to fly. He then proposed to me to explain how I could contrive it. I replied, that when I attentively considered the several creatures that fly, and thought of effecting by art what they do by the force of nature, I did not find one so fit to imitate as the bat. As soon as the poor man heard mention made of a bat, his frenzy for the year turning upon that animal, he cried out aloud, "It is very true, a bat is the thing." He then addressed himself to me and said, "Benvenuto, if you had the opportunity, would you have the heart to make an attempt to fly?" I answered, that if he would give me leave, I had courage enough to attempt to fly as far as Prati by means of a pair of wings waxed over. He said thereupon, "I should like to see you fly; but as the Pope has enjoined me to watch over you with the utmost care, and I know that you have the cunning of the devil, and would avail yourself of the opportunity to make your escape, I am resolved to keep you locked up with a hundred keys that you may not slip out of my hands." I then began to solicit him with new entreaties, putting him in mind that I had had it in my power to make my escape, but through regard to the promise I had made him, would never avail myself of the opportunity. I therefore besought him for the love of God, and as he had conferred so many obligations on me, that he would not make my condition worse than it

was. Whilst I uttered these words, he gave instant orders that I should be secured and confined a closer prisoner than ever. When I saw that it was to no purpose to entreat him any farther, I said before all present, "Confine me as close as you please, I will contrive to make my escape notwithstanding." So they carried me off, and locked me up with the utmost care.

I then began to deliberate upon the method I should pursue to make my escape: as soon as I saw myself locked in, I set about examining the place in which I was confined, and thinking I had discovered a sure way to get out, I revolved in my mind in what manner I could descend the height of the great tower. Having first of all formed a conjecture of the length of line sufficient for me to descend by, I took a new pair of sheets which I had cut into slips, and sewed fast together. The next thing I wanted was a pair of pincers, which I took from a Savoyard, who was upon guard at the castle. This man had care of the casks and cisterns belonging to the castle, and likewise worked as a carpenter; and as he had several pairs of pincers, and one amongst others which was thick and large, thinking it would suit my purpose, I took it, and hid it in the tick of my bed. The time being come that I intended to make use of it, I began, with the pincers, to pull at the nails which fastened the plates of iron fixed upon the door, and as the door was double, the clenching of those nails could not be perceived. I exerted my utmost efforts to draw out one of them, and at last with great difficulty succeeded. As soon as I had drawn the nail, I was again obliged to torture my invention, in order to devise some expedient to prevent its being perceived. I immediately thought of mixing a little of the filings of rusty iron with wax, and this mixture was exactly the color of the heads of the nails which I had drawn; I with it counterfeited their resemblance on the iron plates, and as many as I drew I imitated in wax. I left each of the plates fastened both at top and bottom, and refixed them with some of the nails that I had drawn; but the nails were cut, and I

drove them in slightly, so that they just served to hold the plates. I found it a very difficult matter to effect all this, because the constable dreamed every night that I had made my escape, and therefore used to send frequently to have the prison searched: the person employed on this occasion had the appearance and behavior of one of the city-guards. The name of this fellow was Bozza, and he constantly brought with him another, named Giovanni Pedignone; the latter was a soldier, the former a servant. This Giovanni never came to the room where I was confined without giving me abusive language. The other was from Prato, where he had lived with an apothecary: he every evening carefully examined the plates of iron above mentioned, as well as the whole prison. I constantly said to him, "Examine me well, for I am positively determined to make my escape." These words occasioned a bitter enmity between him and me.

With the utmost care I deposited all my tools, that is to say, my pincers, and a dagger of a tolerable length, with other things belonging to me, in the tick of my bed, and as soon as it was daylight swept the room myself, for I naturally delighted in cleanliness, but on this occasion I took care to be particularly neat. As soon as I had swept the room, I made my bed with equal care, and adorned it with flowers, which were every morning brought me by a Savoyard. This man, as I have observed before, took care of the cisterns and the casks belonging to the castle, and sometimes amused himself with working in wood: it was from him I stole the pincers, with which I pulled out the nails that fastened the iron plates on the door. To return to my bed: whenever Bozza and Pedignone came, I generally bade them keep at a distance from it, that they might not dirty and spoil it: sometimes I would say to them (for they would now and then merely for diversion tumble my bed), "You dirty wretches, I will draw one of your swords, and give you such a chastisement as will astonish you. Do you think yourself worthy to touch the bed of a man like me? Upon such an occasion I should not spare my

own life, but am sure that I should be able to take away yours; so leave me to my own troubles and sorrows, and do not make my lot more bitter than it is. If you act otherwise, I will show you what a desperate man is capable of.'' The men repeated what I said to the constable, who expressly commanded them never to go near my bed, ordering them at the same time when they came to me, to have no swords, and to be particularly careful with respect to every other circumstance. Having thus secured my bed from their searches, I thought I had gained the main point, and was on that account highly rejoiced.

One holiday evening the constable being very much disordered, and his madness being at the highest pitch, he scarce said anything else but that he was become a bat, and desired his people, that if Benvenuto happened to make his escape, they should take no notice of it, for he must soon catch me, as he should, doubtless, be much better able to fly by night than I; adding, ''Benvenuto is only a counterfeit bat; but I am a bat in good earnest. Let me alone to manage him, I shall be able to catch him, I warrant you.'' His frenzy continuing thus in its utmost violence for several nights, he tired the patience of all his servants; and I by various means came to the knowledge of all that passed, though I was indebted for my chief information to the Savoyard, who was very much attached to me.

As I had formed a resolution to attempt my escape that night, let what would happen, I began with praying fervently to Almighty God, that it would please his divine majesty to befriend and assist me in that hazardous enterprise: I then went to work, and was employed the whole night in preparing whatever I had occasion for. Two hours before daybreak I took the iron plates from the door with great trouble and difficulty, for the bolt and the wood that received it made a great resistance, so that I could not open them, but was obliged to cut the wood. I however at last forced the door, and having taken with me the above-mentioned slips of linen, which

I had rolled up in bundles with the utmost care, I went out and got upon the right side of the tower, and having observed, from within, two tiles of the roof, I leaped upon them with the utmost ease. I was in a white doublet, and had on a pair of white half hose, over which I wore a pair of little light boots, that reached half way up my legs, and in one of these I put my dagger. I then took the end of one of my bundles of long slips, which I had made out of the sheets of my bed, and fastened it to one of the tiles of the roof that happened to jut out four inches; and the long string of slips was fastened to the tiles in the manner of a stirrup. When I had fixed it firmly, I addressed myself to the Deity in these terms: "Almighty God, favor my cause, for thou knowest it is a just one, and I am not on my part wanting in my utmost efforts to make it succeed." Then letting myself down gently, and the whole weight of my body being sustained by my arm, I at last reached the ground.

It was not a moonlight night, but the stars shone with resplendent luster. When I had touched the ground, I first contemplated the great height which I had descended with so much courage; and then walked away in high joy, thinking I had recovered my liberty. But I soon found myself mistaken; for the constable had caused two pretty high walls to be erected on that side, which made an inclosure for a stable and a poultry-yard: this place was fastened with great bolts on the outside. When I saw myself immured in this inclosure, I felt the greatest anxiety imaginable. Whilst I was walking backwards and forwards, I stumbled on a long pole covered with straw; this I with much difficulty fixed against the wall, and by the strength of my arms climbed to the top of it; but as the wall was sharp, I could not get a sufficient hold to enable me to descend by the pole to the other side. I therefore resolved to have recourse to my other string of slips, for I had left one tied to the great tower; so I took the string, and having fastened it properly, I descended down the steep wall. This put me to a great deal of pain and trouble, and likewise tore the skin off

the palms of my hands, insomuch that they were all over bloody; for which reason I rested myself a little. When I thought I had sufficiently recruited my strength, I came to the last wall, which looked towards the meadows, and having prepared my string of long slips, which I wanted to get about one of the niched battlements, in order to descend this as I had done the other higher wall, a sentinel perceived what I was about. Finding my design obstructed, and myself in danger of my life, I resolved to cope with the soldier, who seeing me advance towards him resolutely with my drawn dagger in my hand, thought it most advisable to keep out of my way. After I had gone a little way from my string, I quickly returned to it; and though I was seen by another of the soldiers upon guard, the man did not care to take any notice of me. I then fastened my string to the niched battlement, and began to let myself down. Whether it was owing to my being near the ground, and preparing to give a leap, or whether my hands were quite tired, I do not know, but being unable to hold out any longer, I fell, and in falling struck my head and became quite insensible.

I continued in that state about an hour and a half, as nearly as I can guess. The day beginning to break, the cool breeze that precedes the rising of the sun brought me to myself; but I had not yet thoroughly recovered my senses, for I had conceived a strange notion that I had been beheaded, and was then in purgatory. I however, by degrees, recovered my strength and powers; and perceiving that I had got out of the castle, I soon recollected all that had befallen me. As I perceived that my senses had been affected, before I took notice that my leg was broken, I clapped my hands to my head, and found them all bloody. I afterwards searched my body all over, and thought I had received no hurt of an consequence; but upon attempting to rise from the ground, I found that my right leg was broken three inches above the heel, which threw me into a terrible consternation. I thereupon pulled my dagger with its scabbard out of my boot:

this scabbard was cased with a large piece of metal at the bottom, which occasioned the hurt to my leg; as the bone could not bend any way, it broke in that place. I therefore threw away the scabbard, and cutting the part of my string of slips that I still had left, I bandaged my leg as well as I could. I then crept on my hands and knees towards the gate, with my dagger in my hand, and, upon coming up to it, found it shut; but observing a stone under the gate, and thinking that it did not stick very fast, I prepared to push it away; clapping my hands to it, I found that I could move it with ease, so I soon pulled it out, and effected my egress. It was about five hundred paces from the place where I had had my fall to the gate at which I entered the city.

As soon as I got in, some mastiff dogs came up, and bit me severely: finding that they persisted to worry me I took my dagger and gave one of them so severe a stab, that he set up a loud howling; whereupon all the dogs in the neighborhood, as it is the nature of those animals, ran up to him; and I made all the haste I could to crawl towards the church of St. Maria Transpontina. When I arrived at the entrance of the street that leads towards the Castle of St. Angelo, I took my way from thence towards St. Peter's gate; but, as it was then broad daylight, I reflected that I was in great danger, and happened to meet with a water-carrier, who had loaded his ass, and filled his vessels with water, I called to him and begged he would put me upon the beast's back, and carry me to the landing-place of the steps of St. Peter's church. I told him, that I was an unfortunate youth, who had been concerned in a love-intrigue, and had made an attempt to get out at a window, from which I had fallen, and broken my leg; but as the house I came out of belonged to a person of the first rank, I should be in danger of being cut to pieces if discovered. I therefore earnestly entreated him to take me up, and offered to give him a gold crown; so saying, I clapped my hand to my purse, which was very well lined. The honest waterman instantly took me upon his back, and carried me to the

steps before St. Peter's church, where I desired him to leave me and to run back to his ass.

I immediately set out, crawling in the same manner I had done before, in order to reach the house of the Duchess, consort to Duke Ottavio, natural daughter to the Emperor, and who had been formerly married to Alessandro, the late Duke of Florence. . . .

Whilst I was crawling along upon all four, one of the servants of Cardinal Cornaro knew me, and running immediately to his master's apartment, awakened him out of his sleep, saying to him, "My most reverend Lord, here is your jeweler, Benvenuto, who has made his escape out of the castle, and is crawling along upon all four, quite besmeared with blood: by what I can judge from appearances, he seems to have broken one of his legs, and we cannot guess whither he is bending his course." The cardinal, the moment he heard this, said to his servants, "Run, and bring him hither to my apartment upon your backs." When I came into his presence, the good cardinal bade me fear nothing, and immediately sent for some of the most eminent surgeons of Rome to take care of me; amongst these was Signor Giacopo of Perugia, an excellent practitioner. This last set the bone, then bandaged my leg, and bled me. As my veins were swelled more than usual, and he wanted to make a pretty wide incision, the blood gushed from me with such violence, and in so great a quantity, that it spurted into his face, and covered him in such a manner, that he found it a very difficult matter to continue his operation. He looked upon this as very ominous, and was with difficulty prevailed upon to attend me afterwards; nay, he was several times for leaving me, recollecting that he had run a great hazard by having anything to do with me. The cardinal then caused me to be put into a private apartment, and went directly to the Vatican, in order to intercede in my behalf with the Pope.

Below appears a sonnet written on his distress:

BODY

Say, plaintive and desponding soul,
Why thus so loth on earth to stay?

SOUL

In vain we strive 'gainst Heaven's control;
Since life's a pain, let's haste away.

BODY

Ah, wing not hence thy rapid flight,
Content thyself, nor fate deplore:
New scenes of joy and pure delight
Heaven still for thee may have in store.

SOUL

I then consent to stay a while,
Freedom once more in hopes to gain;
The rest of life with ease beguile,
And dread no more the rattling chain.

The design for the salt cellar:

I designed an oval, almost two-thirds of a cubit in size; and upon this oval, as the sea appears to embrace the earth, I made two figures about a hand high, in a sitting posture, with the legs of one within those of the other, as some long branches of the sea are seen to enter the land; and in the hand of a male figure, representing the ocean, I put a ship, contrived with great art, in which was deposited a large quantity of salt; under this, I represented four sea-horses, and in the right hand of the ocean I put his trident. The earth I represented by a female figure, the most elegant and beautiful I could form an idea of, leaning with one hand against a grand and magnificent temple: this was to hold the pepper. In the other hand I put a cornucopia, adorned with all the embellishments I could think of. To complete this idea, in that part which appeared to be earth, I represented all the most beautiful animals which that element produces. In the part which stood for the sea I designed the finest sort

of fish and shells which so small a space was capable of containing; in the remainder of the oval I placed several grand and noble ornaments.

The design for the gate of Fontainebleau and the fountain, prepared for the King of France:

I gave a beautiful proportion to the gate, and over it I put an exact semicircle, with some agreeable projections on each side: instead of two pillars, which the order of architecture seemed to require for their support, I placed two satyrs: one of these, something above half-relief, appeared to sustain with one arm that part of the pile which touched the columns; in the other it held a large massive club; the countenance was so stern and fierce as to strike terror into the beholders: the other satyr had the same attitude, but differed from the former in the head, and some other parts; it held in its hand a whip, with three balls fastened to certain chains. Though I call these figures satyrs, they had nothing in common with those sylvan gods but certain little horns and heads resembling that of a goat: in all other respects they were of the human form. In the same circle I represented a female figure in a reclining attitude, with her left arm upon the neck of a hart, which was a device of the King's: on one side of her I designed, in half-relief, little goats, boars, and other wild beasts; and on the other, in stronger relief, greyhounds, and other dogs of different sorts, such as are to be seen in the delightful wood where the fountain rises. I drew the whole plan in an oblong form, and at each corner I designed a victory in basso-rilievo, holding little torches in their hands, as they are represented by the ancients. On the top I placed the figure of a salamander, the King's own emblem, with several other ornaments pleasing to the eye, and adapted to the nature of the work, which was of the Ionic order.

. . . . . .

This model was above two cubits in size: it represented a fountain in the form of a complete square, with fine

steps round it, which intersected each other—a thing almost unexampled in any country whatever. In the midst of this fountain I placed a solid mass, which rose a little above its brim: upon this mass stood a naked figure of a most graceful shape. It had a broken lance in its right hand, raised aloft in the air, and the left it kept upon the handle of a cimetar, the form of which was exceedingly beautiful. It rested upon the left foot and held the right upon the crest of a helmet, the workmanship of which was the richest and most elegant that could be conceived. At the four sides of the fountain, I had designed a high raised figure, seated, with many ingenious devices and ornaments to each.

An incident that concerns his helper Ascanio and the great bronze statue of Mars which Cellini has executed:

My boy Ascanio was in love with a girl of extraordinary beauty, who answered his passion with equal ardor. The girl, having on that account fled from her mother, came one night to Ascanio, and not caring afterwards to return home, he was at a loss where to conceal her; but necessity sharpening his wit, he bethought himself of the odd expedient of hiding her in my Mars, and let her sleep in the head of the statue. There he stayed to watch her, and in the night he took her out sometimes, without making any noise. I had almost finished that head, and vanity prompted me to leave it uncovered, so that it was every day exposed to the view of the inhabitants of Paris. The neighbors began to climb upon the roofs of their houses to see it, and great numbers of people went thither on purpose to indulge their curiosity. At the same time a report became current at Paris, that my old castle was haunted by a ghost; but, for my part, I could never perceive anything to induce me to think it was well founded. This ghost was universally called Zemmonio Boreo through the city of Paris. Now, as the girl who was concealed in the head could not but be some-

times seen to move, while her eyes were more or less apparent, some of the foolish and credulous populace affirmed that the ghost had entered the body of the great statue, and that it made the eyes and mouth move as if it was just going to speak. Accordingly many went away frightened out of their wits; and some persons of penetration and sagacity, who came to see the figure, could not doubt the truth of what they had heard, when they contemplated the fire and brightness of the eyes of the said figure. So they declared in their turn that there was a spirit within it; not being aware that there was not only spirit in it, but likewise good flesh and blood. In the meantime I was busy in putting together my fine gate, with all the ornaments described above.

VI. Painting. The early Christians showed some artistic spirit in the rude decorations with which they lined the catacombs, but it was inferior to the work of the pagans. Byzantine types were stiff, poorly drawn, but dressed in rich and elaborate costumes, often lying upon a background overlaid with pure gold. Such paintings exerted a considerable influence far into the Middle Ages, but from the thirteenth century interest in them began to decline, and the growth of the commercial cities gave a secular interest to art which permitted a greater freedom in choice of subjects, though for centuries the chief inspiration of the painters lay in religious subjects. During the prevalence of the Gothic style of architecture the small wall space worked against the development of painting, and the decorative spirit was expanded in designing magnificent stained-glass windows and upon statuary.

By the thirteenth century, however, painting in Italy flourished as never before, and one of the great factors in its renaissance was the change in architectural style by which the great windows, which were not wanted in the sunny southern lands, were done away with and their place taken by broad wall spaces, which furnished such excellent opportunities for mural decorations that they were utilized immediately. Nowhere in the history of the world was there such a rapid and peculiar development of painting as in Italy, for within a comparatively brief space of time it had extended throughout the peninsula, some of the greatest masterpieces of the world had been completed and painting had reached a height of excellence that has never been excelled.

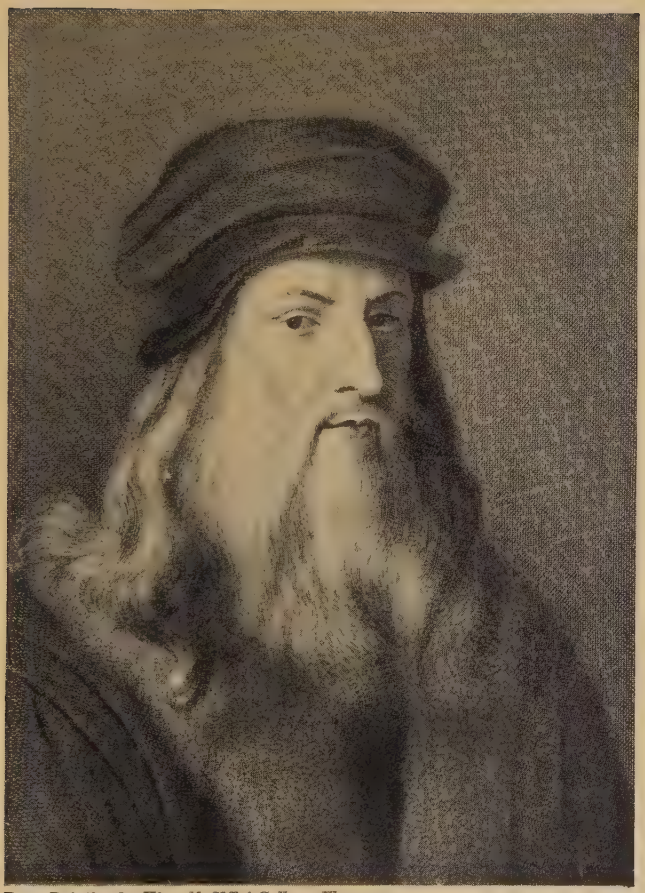
What the Renaissance accomplished in painting was to perfect drawing, to put the figures into appropriate surroundings, to make artists follow nature more closely and to introduce into the pictures natural objects, animals, and children playing naturally, thus forever destroying the conventionality and artificiality which had heretofore characterized the treatment of all Biblical subjects, to say the least. We cannot here give more than a glance at a subject upon which volumes could be written, nor can we even mention more than a few of the great masters whose names will be forever famous in art and who made the Renaissance in painting even more brilliant than it was in the other lines which we are

considering. However, there are a few figures that stand out so boldly and are so thoroughly characteristic of the age that it would be a mistake to omit them.

Giotto (1266–1337), although both sculptor and architect, was one of the earliest leaders of painting, especially of religious frescoes, in which he showed an independence from tradition and a naturalness in drawing and coloring which contrasted strongly with the work of his predecessors and marked the birth of a new school.

Among those who excelled especially in the simplicity, harmony and purity of color was Fra Angelico (1387–1455), a Florentine who claimed that his work was inspired and who never changed, never altered, what he had done. His work still bears marks of conventionalism and was by no means perfect, yet his madonnas and angels which are to be found in the galleries at Rome and Florence are always admired.

VII. Leonardo da Vinci. One of the most distinguished individuals of Italy, famous for the purity and excellence of his character as well as his almost universal talents, was Leonardo da Vinci, the natural son of a Florentine notary. Leonardo was born in 1452, and though his mother was probably a servant in his father's family, yet it is certain that he was brought up carefully and always remained in pleasant relationship with the whole family. He is noted as having been an extremely hand-



From Painting by Himself, Uffizi Gallery, Florence

DA VINCI
1452–1519

some man, in whose figure both strength and symmetry were combined, and whose face expressed the ardent qualities of his mind and the frankness and energy of his character. Very early he distinguished himself in his studies, which took a wide range; in fact, he threw himself with force and energy into all lines of intellectual endeavor, and though painting always remained his favorite art and raised him to a rank excelled by but one or two, yet he was famous as engineer, inventor and architect and as a wonderful master of ceremonies who designed the great pageants in which the enthusiastic Italians and French delighted to engage. Leonardo was but another example of the Renaissance incarnate, and the amount of work he accomplished and the long series of years through which he labored can be compared only with similar exertions by Cellini, Michelangelo and Raphael.

Leonardo gained the patronage of Lorenzo de' Medici, and he profited extensively by the favor. His natural inconstancy of disposition, however, tempted him to undertake too many different things, while his handsome figure and attractive personality made him a great favorite with the fair sex and prompted an expenditure that he was not able to continue. The draft upon him, however, seemed to stimulate his energies, and we find him making astronomical observations, pursuing with vigor the study of natural history and botany,

while he was constantly bringing out inventions of various machines for lifting great weights, tunneling mountains, conducting waters from one place to another and making innumerable models for watches, windmills, presses and such things.

One of his early accomplishments in painting is thus related by his biographer, John William Brown:

Willing to gratify his favorite, he desired his son to do as the man wished; and Leonardo determined to paint something that should astonish his father by the great progress he had made in his art. This piece of wood must have been roughly made and badly put together, as our young artist was obliged to have it planed off and the interstices filled up with stucco, so as to leave a surface sufficiently smooth for his purpose. He then considered for some time what he should represent, and at length determined on painting a monster that should have the effect of Medusa's head on all beholders. For this purpose he collected every kind of reptile—vipers, adders, lizards, toads, serpents and other poisonous or noxious animals, and formed a monster so wonderfully designed, that it appeared to flash fire from its eyes, and also to infect the air with its breath. When he had succeeded to his wishes in this horrible composition, he called his father to try its effect upon him; who, not expecting what he was to see, started back with horror and affright, and was just going to run out of the room, when Leonardo stopped him by assuring him it was the work of his own hands, exclaiming, that he was quite satisfied, as his picture had the effect he anticipated. Signore Piero was, of course, too much delighted with his son's performance to think of giving it to his "contadino," for whom he procured an ordinary painting, and sold Leonardo's to a merchant of Florence for one hundred ducats. This was a very large sum to give for a

picture, when the value of money at the time is remembered; but it was soon after sold to the Duke of Milan for three times the original cost.

About the year 1487 Leonardo went to Milan at the invitation of Lodovico Sforza il Moro, a man who in many respects resembled Lorenzo de' Medici and who attempted to do for Milan what the latter had done for Florence. Through all the years that Leonardo stayed in Milan he was actively engaged in forwarding the interests of his patron, and never for a moment slackened his zeal or energy. Among many wonderful things that he did, there stands out most conspicuously his masterpiece, *The Last Supper,* on the walls of the refectory of the convent church of Sta Maria delle Grazie, one of the greatest of all paintings. Unfortunately, because of the materials with which it was painted, the dampness of the walls or unknown causes, the painting rapidly faded, and had it not been considered so marvelous and been so many times copied, we should be at a loss to know its details. Moreover, when the French under Napoleon occupied Italy, the refectory was turned into a stable, and the soldiers seem to have taken delight in firing at the figures of Christ and the Apostles, for they were riddled with bullet marks. Although several times restored by faithful painters, *The Last Supper* has again faded and gives no pleasure to the visitor.

At the fall of the Sforzas, da Vinci went to Venice, commenced many pictures which he

never finished, devoted himself to vast engineering projects, and in 1502 traveled as chief engineer for Caesar Borgia, mapping out his country, planning canals, harbors and other engineering projects, after which he returned to Florence. Here he was engaged to work upon the decorations of the Seignory (council hall), where Michelangelo also held a commission. The rivalry between the two great artists was intense, and while each respected the other, they never became friends or even associated unless under compulsion. When their designs for the great mural decorations were completed, they were exhibited together, and all Florence was wildly enthusiastic over the work. While the two were engaged upon it, there often came to watch them at their labors Raphael, then only nineteen, who later excelled them both in the beauty of his work. Unfortunately for da Vinci, he tried an experiment in the color of his picture and destroyed it.

Leo I, the great Maecenas of the Christian world, was the chief patron of Michelangelo, and to Rome Leonardo went, but his reception was not to his liking; in fact, his enemies seem to have prejudiced the Pope against his work on the ground that a man who had undertaken so many things could not be supremely excellent in any one.

In 1516 Leonardo was at Paris in the service of King Francis I, with a generous salary and a position in accordance with his merits, but from the time of his arrival in France his

health began to fail, and in May, 1519, he died. Vasari relates the circumstances of his death, but the incident is contradicted by other writers:

> At length, seeing himself near death, he confessed himself with much contrition; and although he was unable to stand, he desired his friends and servants to support him, that he might receive the holy sacrament out of bed in a more reverent posture. When fatigued with this exertion the King came to visit him, and Leonardo, raising himself up in his bed out of respect to his Majesty, began to relate the circumstances of his illness, and the wrongs he had done both to God and man, by not making better use of his talents. In the midst of this conversation he was seized with a paroxysm, which proved the messenger of death; on seeing which, the King hastened to assist him, and supported him in his bed, in order to alleviate his sufferings. But his divine spirit, knowing he could not receive greater honor, expired in the King's arms in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

In spite of his incessant occupation and arduous labors, Leonardo found time to write a number of treatises on various subjects—scientific, engineering, etc.—and also to compose a *Treatise on Painting,* which is still considered an extremely-helpful book for beginners and is remarkable in its systematic arrangement, clearness of style and comprehensiveness in detail. He treats the subject under the following heads: Drawing; Invention, or Composition; Light and Shadow; Colors and Coloring, and Miscellaneous Observations. While the work is too technical for purposes of quotation in a work of this kind, yet it is

distinguished by a simplicity and clearness that gives it real literary merit.

VIII. Raphael. Raphael Santi, or Raffaello Sanzio, was born at Urbino, on the borders of Tuscany and Umbria, in 1483. His father, Giovanni Santi, was a painter of some note, and he gave to the boy Raphael much of his early training, but while young he was left an orphan, and devoted his time thereafter to studying the art of painting under the best masters he could find. He worked under Perugino and acquired from him many of the new ideas which he subsequently carried into perfection. Falling under the influence of Pinturicchio, he mastered the technique of that great painter, and in 1504 went to Florence, where he studied and painted under both Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. Under such tutelage the young man grew in skill with astonishing rapidity, and seemed to possess the power to excel his masters in everything he undertook.

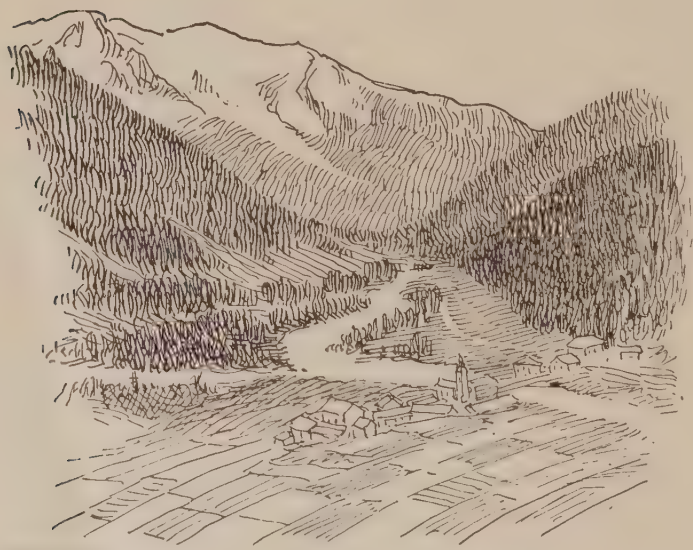
About 1508 he was invited to Rome by Pope Julius II to assist in the decoration of the apartments in the Vatican, and a year later the whole of the work in frescoes was entrusted to him. The amount which he did was prodigious, and the fame he acquired is not often enjoyed by mortals. He was but twenty-five or twenty-six when he began these frescoes, which still, as completed by his pupils, cover the walls of the chambers known as the Stanze of Raphael. It was while he was engaged in

embellishing the Vatican that he painted the *Sistine Madonna,* now in the Dresden Gallery, and the *Transfiguration,* now in the Vatican. The latter was left unfinished at the time of his death, but the former is one of the greatest paintings in the world.

Raphael was only thirty-seven at the time of his death, and with his versatility, his wonderful technique and the beauty of his designs he might have accomplished even greater things than those in which he has never been equaled.

IX. The Decline of Painting. We have not mentioned Titian (1477–1576), the wealthy Venetian who during his long and active life painted wonderful portraits and the famous historical groups which now decorate the galleries in London, Paris and Venice; we have not spoken of Correggio (1494–1534), who was noted for his accurate drawing, the grace of his figures and the charm of their expression. But these are only two of many who should be considered if we were writing a history of art. Enough for our purpose has been presented if we have given some appreciation of the marvelous activities of artistic Italy during the Renaissance. But rapid as was its culmination, the decay of the arts was equally rapid. Even in the time of Michelangelo and Raphael could be seen the signs of slavish imitation and a failure of the enthusiasm and inspiration which had brought about the great revival. Though artists of skill and power

often appeared, yet their work was never up to the standard of the old masters, and in general the art degenerated until Italy had nothing left but its memories, while the spirit of the Renaissance moved on into other countries. Although we may wonder that no preëminent excellence was retained in any one of the three arts we have been considering, yet it is only fair to say that Italy led the way for all other countries, and during the time that the Renaissance was at its height she produced works that nowhere have been excelled.



MONT BLANC

The
WRITINGS
of
MANKIND
SYLVESTER
PACIFIC
OCEAN
ATLANTI
OCE

NORWAY
SWEDEN
RUSSIA
EUROPE
ASIA
GERMANY
POLAND
FRANCE
SPAIN
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
PERSIA
ARABIA
EGYPT
INDIA
CHINA
AFRICA
EAST INDIES
INDIAN OCEAN